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THE TIMES
Tomorrow

The low rollers
From bingo hall to
betting shop: Alan
Hamilton reports on the
small-time gamblers
Eye-openers
What's happening to
opticians now the
Government has ended
their monopoly?



Islands in the sun
Travelling to sunspots in
the Mediterranean:
Malta, Corsica and
Sardinia

The new Member
David Butler assesses the
Chesterfield result

Just testing
John Woodcock reports
from Karachi on the
opening day's play of the
first Test match against
Pakistan

Union fears over Lords decision

Union leaders fear that the House of Lords, in upholding the Court of Appeal's decision on the illegality of the dispute between the National Union of Journalists and a company owned by David Dimbleby, the broadcaster, has opened a loophole for other employers.

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Liberal budget

Liverpool City Council's Liberals presented an alternative budget involving a rate increase but avoiding the redundancies threatened by the ruling Labour group.

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Paris protest

Paris is braced for a mass demonstration today by five miners' unions protesting against threatened pit closures, as industrial unrest spreads throughout France.

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After Trudeau

The surprise resignation of Mr Pierre Trudeau as Prime Minister of Canada sent the Toronto stock market up 13 points, while would-be successors jockeyed for position.

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Yard pullout

Bechtel, the US construction group, is likely to announce today that it is deciding to pull out of the bidding for the Scott Lithgow shipyard.

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Prague deal

Frau Ingrid Berg, the East German Prime Minister's niece, left the West German Embassy in Prague after securing promises she would be allowed to emigrate to the West.

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Soccer rescue

Charlton Athletic has been taken over by a consortium and Robert Maxwell has formulated a rescue plan for Derby County.

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Husain and Arafat enter period of new found harmony

From Christopher Walker, Amman

After four days of intensive negotiation, an agreement in principle has been reached between King Husain and Mr Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which could pave the way for the emergence of a block of Arab 'moderates' prepared to talk with Israel over the future of the occupied territories.

Although Arab leaders do not expect any progress in the Middle East peace process until after the US elections, the new found harmony between Jordan and the PLO is an essential ingredient for any long-term development.

Among other countries which King Husain hopes will back his moderate line are Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Gulf states.

"This is just the start", Mr Arafat explained in reference to the outcome of the talks. "1984 will be a year of increased concessions by the US to Israel, not a year for making peace".

He had a final 2½ hour session with the King yesterday after attending military exercises with him earlier in the week, a symbolic gesture of their reconciliation.

Under the agreement, the infrastructure has been created for future political cooperation. This will include further here by Mr Arafat and what diplomats believe will be attempts to edge his 'loyalist' wing of the PLO towards eventual recognition of Israel, possibly through redraft-

ing of the key United Nations Resolution 242.

During the complex bargaining process now under way, it is understood that the King will allow the PLO to step up its presence in Amman, although not to the extent of letting in fighting men.

The joint Jordanian-PLO Committee for channelling Arab cash to the West Bank has been revived after lying dormant for a year.

One reason for the non-specific nature of the agreement is to enable Mr Arafat to try to sell

the idea of cooperation to other elements in the PLO, including members of his Fatah movement. He is expected to press shortly for a crucial session of the ruling Palestine National Council.

"The talks have been successful in clearing the atmosphere which prevailed after the breakdown of the earlier talks on April 10 last year", explained

Mrs Laila Sharaf, Jordan's new Information Minister.

"We reached basic agreement on principles upon which we could move in the future. But no specific elements of any concrete nature have been agreed on."

Mrs Sharaf added: "I would not characterize our agreement as an initiative nor as a formula for solving the Palestinian problem."

Many sensitive issues have been left outstanding including the central question of how the Palestinians would be represented in any future peace negotiations with Israel.

The second is expected to upset the Israeli Government which has emerged as an unlikely ally of the Arab rejectionists in its condemnation of the Amman talks, and the part played in them by a delegation of 40 West Bank Palestinians, who presented a petition to both Mr Arafat and the King urging them to cooperate before it was too late to save any Palestinian land.

Jordan is now braced for violent attempts by Syria, Libya and PLO extremists based in Damascus to try to sabotage the agreement.

The possibility of renewed terrorist attacks against Jordanian targets is less than a month before the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh are due to start their tour of the desert Kingdom.

Gemayel in Syria and UN seeks deal, page 6

US missile sale to Saudi Arabia

Washington (AP) - The Washington Administration has notified Congress it intends to sell 1,200 anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia in a move already meeting opposition from supporters of Israel, a Defence Department spokesman said yesterday. The missiles would be sold for \$141m (\$94m) cash.

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The man on the left: Mr Tony Benn, Labour candidate in the Chesterfield by-election, with his wife, Caroline, as the poll caused by Mr Eric Varley's resignation got under way yesterday (Photograph: Harry Kerr).

Thatcher gracious in GCHQ victory

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

Giving the first sign of willingness to be magnanimous in victory, the Prime Minister yesterday thanked the great majority of staff of the Government Communications Headquarters for agreeing to relinquish trade union membership, and sympathized with those who had found the decision difficult.

She told the Commons that well over 90 per cent had fallen in with government wishes.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher was prompted by a Conservative backbencher, Sir Anthony Meyer, who congratulated her on showing courage and determination in winning a great victory at Cheltenham which he thought was less significant than her victory in the South Atlantic.

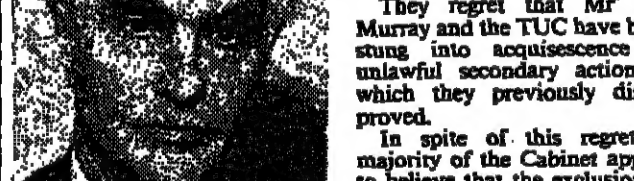
Sir Anthony, MP for Clwyd

Some of Mrs Thatcher's colleagues believe that the TUC has had its biggest public relations success for some time in presenting itself as the wronged party.

They regret that Mr Len Murray and the TUC have been stung into acquiescence in a unilateral secondary action of which they previously disapproved.

In spite of this regret, a majority of the Cabinet appear to believe that the exclusion of the unions from Cheltenham was the correct decision.

Defeated unions, page 2



Sir Anthony Meyer: Advocated conciliation.

Worsening jobless trend perplexes Whitehall

By Frances Williams, Economics Correspondent

The jobless trend has worsened sharply in the first two months of this year after several months of near stability.

Though the total number of people out of work fell last month by nearly 13,300 to 3,186,386, this was much less than the normal February drop. After adjusting for seasonal variations and excluding school leavers, the number of unemployed adults rose by 28,600 to 3,004,600, or one in eight of the workforce, similar to increase of 29,900 in January.

This compares with gains of only 1,300 a month in the second half of last year.

Mr Tom King, the Employment Secretary, admitted that the figures were disappointing. The Government has been hoping that unemployment

would steady this year and perhaps decline slightly, as economic recovery continued.

But privately officials confessed they were perplexed. Other evidence suggests that the demand for labour has strengthened. People are working more overtime and employment has begun to rise, while the latest survey of manufacturing by the Confederation of British Industry show that companies in all sectors were planning to boost output and investment.

However, vacancies, after rising steeply for much of last year, have been declining for four months.

Productivity in industry is still improving rapidly, which suggests that companies are producing more with a smaller workforce.

Mr Macfarlane said that the FA had done everything in its power to prevent trouble.

The fear is that the rest of Europe may decide to break off fixtures against England.

Fans condemned, page 3

BP project to create 7,000 jobs

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

BP is to develop four natural gas fields in the southern sector of the North Sea, involving an investment of £1.3 billion and creating up to 7,000 jobs in the British offshore oil industry.

The fields, in water between 100 and 150 feet deep, are 40 miles off the Humber coast and will need seven or eight new production platforms.

BP, which is expected to announce record profits in a fortnight, will place more than 80 per cent of the contracts needed for the fields with British industry. Gas should come ashore in 1987 with full supplies to the national network starting in 1990.

The new fields, named Cleeton, Ravenspurn, Hyde and Hotes after Yorkshire villages which have disappeared because of coastal erosion, contain 2.5 trillion cubic feet of gas, equivalent to 450 million barrels of oil in energy terms.

BP made the discoveries some years ago, but in the past 18 months company engineers have been able to more accurately assess the extent of the reserves.

The gas, which will be sold to British Gas after negotiation, is expected to undercut supplies of Norwegian and Dutch gas on both price and delivery.

Details, page 25

Pay-offs curb on doomed councils

By Hugh Clayton, Local Government Correspondent

Golden handshakes for new employees of councils threatened with abolition by the Government will be ruled out by a law to be enacted after Easter. The rule will apply retrospectively even if payoffs are agreed between councils and staff at the time of employment.

The rule will affect only staff engaged from today by the Greater London Council and the six English metropolitan county councils, all of which the Government proposes to abolish in two years. But the rule will not affect redundancy and compensation already agreed with councils' existing workforce of 190,000.

The rule was foreshadowed yesterday by Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, when he disclosed the parts of the abolition mechanism which will affect staff of the threatened councils. A Bill to create the machinery needed for abolition will be published before Easter and a Bill to abolish the councils will follow.

Mr John McDonnell, chairman of the GLC's finance committee, said that ministers were showing "callous disregard for thousands of GLC workers and their families". He also condemned the Government's decision to include in the abolition Bill a clause allowing borough and district councils which will take over the tasks of abolished councils to challenge their spending in court before abolition.

Mr Jenkin explained that the new right for the district and borough councils was the same as that already available to individual electors, he added that the successor borough and district councils will have to consider taking staff from the abolished councils when they take over the function of those councils.

Those who move to similar jobs in smaller councils for lower pay will receive lump sums yet to be negotiated with unions. A new quango will be set up to stop threatened councils giving "unjustified" pay rises and promotions.

No action taken on journalist

The Director of Public Prosecutions will not be taking action against Mr Duncan Campbell, the New Statesman journalist, whose papers were seized by police after he was knocked unconscious in a bicycle accident. Scotland Yard said last night that Mr Campbell's bag was taken to King's Cross Road police station for safe keeping. Mr Campbell commented: "They are not taking action because the DPP knows it would be a great embarrassment to them."

£5 buys him a pair of boots.

Bump cap and hood £8.

Lifejacket and safety line £72.

Protective jacket £40.

Protective trousers £30.

Boots £5.

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Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Thatcher brands violent football fans a disgrace to Britain

Damage estimated at £60,000 to cars on the docksides of Dunkirk testified yesterday to the havoc caused by British football fans on Wednesday as they made their way to Paris.

The new BL models, awaiting transit to Italy, were in a sealed compound, but that did not prevent a handful of hooligans playing dogdoms while they waited for a train.

Yesterday 10 battered cars lay scattered around the large transit yard as insurance assessors for BL catalogued the destruction. The full toll was: four Metros, three Acclams, two Maestros and one Mini.

M Michel Bataillie, Phoenix Assurance assistant manager at Dunkirk, said: "These supporters bought their tickets individually like other passengers and it was only at Dover that British police were alerted to possible problems."

M Bataillie said there were about 300 supporters on the French Sealink ferry St Eloi, but by the time it docked with smashed windows and covered in broken bottles there was no time to bring in French police.

However, he said it was amazing that only 10 out of several hundred cars, including

Rovers and Range Rovers, were damaged.

The fans' behaviour "disgraced our country's name abroad", the Prime Minister told the Commons today.

Labour MPs said that National Front members could have organized much of the violence.

But the sports Minister, Mr Neil Macfarlane said that he did not know whether coordinated minority groups were involved.

Mr Macfarlane will meet the chairman and secretary of the Football Association today to discuss the incident.

"I fully intend to continue to urge all concerned to do everything possible to rid the game of these mindless louts and to urge European countries to use stringent penalties against convicted offenders to act as a deterrent."

Six Britons were still detained in prison last night after being charged in connection with the violent incidents before, during and after the international in Paris on Wednesday.

Twenty-six others who had been arrested were released after questioning. No charges were brought in connection with the damage caused to trains and

ferries on the journey to and from London.

Further incidents involving British fans were reported yesterday. In Calais, a hotel was badly damaged, and on the Paris to London mail train, the sealed mail compartment was broken into.

Those charged in connection with the overturning of a car whose driver was seriously injured have been named as: Joseph Keogh, aged 20, from Bolton; Paul Baker, aged 19, from Middlessex; and David Baldry, aged 21, from Aldershot.

Adrian Hind, aged 18, believed to come from Cornwall, has been charged with damaging a vehicle. Brian Drury, aged 20, address not known, has been charged with carrying a knife. William Robertson, aged 23, from Bournemouth, has been charged with breaking windows and injuring a policeman while resisting arrest.

Mr Kenneth Warburton, aged 22, from Stockport, who was stabbed in the back at the match was still in hospital last night.

The Labour MP for Blackburn, Mr Jack Straw had told the Commons: "A group was carrying a banner called the Blackburn National Front."

Two in love triangle murder jailed for life

A former police constable and a contract killer were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Central Criminal Court yesterday, with a recommendation that they should serve a minimum of 15 years.

Mr Justice Leonard told Anthony Bellchambers, aged 38, and Lawrence Shirley, aged 34, that they had cunningly planned and carried out the "terrible murder" of Mr Norman Cleary, aged 38, a Fleet Street printer.

The judge said that Bellchambers, a prosperous electrical supplier, of Highfield Close, Braintree, Essex, had bought the death of Mr Cleary, of Bale Close, Colchester, who was living with Mrs Christine Bellchambers, his wife.

Bellchambers, dismissed from the police force after being jailed in the 1960s for armed robbery at a hostel, acted for revenge and from a jealous obsession.

Shirley, demolition worker, of Norval Green, Brixton, and an alcoholic, turned executioner for greed, the judge added.

The two men were convicted of murdering Mr Cleary, who died in hospital three weeks after being ambushed and beaten over the head by Shirley

at a block of flats in Islington, north London, in November, 1981.

Mr James Rant, QC for the prosecution, said that although Bellchambers was a prime suspect he had a "cast-iron alibi". He was drinking with a number of people at a public house in south London many miles away from where Mr Cleary was struck down.

Within minutes of the attack Shirley drove past the public house and gave two long blasts on the horn, a pre-arranged signal to Bellchambers that the "contract" had been carried out.

It was not until last summer that details of the contract came to light when Mrs Bellchambers, by then divorced, made a report to detectives.

A "middle man" who had taken cash payments from Bellchambers to Shirley, totalling £10,000 was traced. When interrogated both Bellchambers and Shirley confessed but maintained that the plan had only been to give Mr Cleary "A bit of a hiding" and not to kill him. Shirley who was Canadian born, had served a 20-year sentence for armed robbery and shooting at police.

Man killed wife, sons and himself

A sales manager shot dead his wife, two sons and himself after hearing that she was having an affair and wanted a divorce and that he was to lose his £10,000-a-year job, an inquest was told yesterday.

Mr David Cook, aged 39, his wife Pauline, aged 34, Nathan, aged 12, and Benjamin, aged 11, were found in their burning home near Goole, Humberside, in January.

Mrs Cook's hands and ankles had been tied. The children were in their bedroom. The first shot had missed Benjamin, who had struggled.

Det Insp Archibald Todd said a film about a husband who committed suicide after discovering his wife's affair, was found in the video recorder. Verdicts of unlawful killing and suicide were recorded.

Drink guard on children's train

A drunken railway guard had to be removed from a special train carrying hundreds of handicapped children. York magistrates heard yesterday.

Malcolm Mack, aged 40, of South Shields, Tyne and Wear, was fined £130 after admitting being drunk on duty. Mack - since dismissed - had drunk the equivalent of 10 pints of beer.

Order to return tomcat refused

A dispute over the ownership of a ginger tomcat at the centre of a Crown Court case remained unresolved yesterday when magistrates at Redbridge, north-east London, refused a request to issue an order for the cat to be returned to Police Constable John Sewell and his wife Anna.

Exam blow to coloured PCs

Low educational standards are holding back the recruitment of coloured policemen, the Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire, Mr Ian Kane, says in his annual report published yesterday.

Despite a recruiting drive launched two years ago, there are only eight coloured constables in the Cambridgeshire force of 1,140. But Mr Kane says he will not reduce entrance qualifications.

Inquest award

The chief constable of Merseyside, Mr Kenneth Oxford, was ordered in the High Court in London yesterday to pay legal costs of more than £30,000 incurred by four police officers at the inquest in 1980 on Jimmy Kelly, aged 34, a labourer, who died in police custody.

Body in lake

The police have started a murder inquiry after the body of a woman was found on Wednesday tied with rope and trussed in a plastic sheet at the bottom of West Water, Cumbria, England's deepest lake.

Extradition plea

Ernest Kirkwood, who faces a double murder charge in the United States, was refused leave to appeal yesterday by the House of Lords appeal committee against the dismissal of his plea for a writ of habeas corpus delaying extradition.

MP wins action

Mr Jeffrey Rooker, Labour MP for Birmingham, Perry Barr, accepted undisclosed libel damages at the High Court in London yesterday in settlement of his action over a report in the Daily Express accusing him of hypocrisy in buying a council flat.



Leap year double: Mrs Suzanne Dlycik, who was born on February 29, 1956, showing off her baby, Lisa, born on February 29 this year at Princess Alexandra Hospital at RAF Wroughton, Wiltshire. The chances of the coincidence are three million to one, Mr Richard Dlycik said.

'Mediocre' ferries criticized

By Derek Harris

Many car ferry services to the Continent, investigated by *Holiday Which?* last summer, were "mediocre, with drab surroundings, unimaginative catering, and irritatingly long queues even when the ship was nowhere near full".

A few ships were even unpleasant to travel on, according to the report on the inspectors' investigations. Some services, however, were worth recommending, the report says. These were: Sally the Viking Line's Ramsgate-Dunkirk service for the most comfortable short crossing; Olau Line's Sheerness-Vlissingen ferries for the most comfortable medium-length crossing; DFDS for comfortable Scandinavian crossings. Townsend-Thoresen was considered the best of the big fleets.

Dallas businessmen on London mission to change an image

By John Lawless

The inhabitants of Dallas are fed up with their city's television image, but the 18 top businessmen coming to London in two weeks' time to change that impression could confirm viewers' prejudices.

The man reputed to be the richest Texan, Mr Trammel S. Crow, whose personal fortune is estimated at more than \$500m, will be in the group.

The party is sparing no expense to get the message across, hiring the Churchill Hotel for the day.

The British Overseas Trade Board has been asked to invite 100 businessmen to a free lunch.

The board said: "They are anxious to put across the real industrial and economic profile of Dallas, to get it away from the oil and cattle ranching image of the television series."

"But they are genuinely putting a great emphasis on trade opportunities. They say they want to meet British businessmen who can sell them high-technology products in things like electronics and defence equipment, and quality consumer goods, such as clothing and furniture."

The group will also argue that Dallas is the best location for a distribution site for the southern states.

Mr Crow is the chairman of the 175-acre Dallas Market Center, said to be the world's largest wholesale trade market.

The *Texas Business* magazine recently reported how he had built Info Mart, a "glittering replica" of the former Crystal Palace.

It is, however, the career of the group leader, Major Starke Taylor, which seems to epitomize the self-made American millionaire. He started in the cotton business at 13 and sold his merchandising company to a Swiss buyer in 1980.

He retains a seat on the board, is the director of Dallas's First City Bank, the Dallas and US Telephone Communications Inc., and chairman of a property development and investment consultancy company.

To emphasize high-technology, the mission includes Mr Henry Smyth, who heads the army helicopter improvement programme at Bell Helicopters' plant in Dallas.

Britain loses 1,000 petrol stations every year

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Britain is losing 1,000 petrol stations a year, according to figures issued by *Petroleum Review*, the Institute of Petroleum's monthly publication.

The institute's figures show that although the number is falling new brands continue to appear on forecourts and the number of self-service stations continues to rise by about 500 a year.

Last year, five new brands

appeared - BFC, Peak, Consort, Quest and Spitfire. By contrast, the number of stations owned by the main oil companies fell by 230.

There are now 23,097 petrol stations in Britain, comprising 19,746 in England and Wales, 2,061 in Scotland, 1,109 in Northern Ireland, 141 in the Channel Islands and 40 in the Isle of Man. Of that total 8,718 sell DERV.



St. Katharine-by-the-Tower development, showing International House and the Tower Hotel in the foreground.

When it came to St. Katharine-by-the-Tower, the Taymech team didn't lose their heads.

In recent years, Taymech Ltd. has been involved in some 20 million pounds-worth of engineering and environmental services for this historic redevelopment.

What could have been a massive organisational headache, turned out to be a typical, smoothly-run Taymech operation.

The work, on time and within budget, spanned many areas of activity, from the elegant Tower Hotel to the environmental excellence of the new International House, part of the London World Trade Centre.

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Mrs Peggy Marsh (left) and Mother Janet.

Court clears prioress

A prioress was cleared by a court yesterday of harassment. Mother Janet, Mother Superior of the Holy Paraclete at Snettiston Castle, near Whitby, North Yorkshire, had pleaded not guilty at Whitby Magistrates' Court to cutting main services to Mrs Peggy Marsh, a widow, aged 67, and unlawfully depriving her of residential occupation.

It was alleged by Mr Tony

Rylands, for Mrs Marsh, that water and electricity in accommodation where Mrs Marsh had been living were cut off in mid-December. She had gone for a few days last November, and after breaking a finger decided to stay on for treatment at a local hospital.

Before Christmas Mrs Marsh was invited to supper with the nuns who launched a verbal attack on her to get her out of the accommodation, he said.

PARLIAMENT March 1 1984

A320 airbus gets £250m launch aid from Government

INDUSTRY

Government launch aid of £250m has been agreed with British Aerospace for the A320 European airbus, Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, announced in a statement to the Commons. As a result of the agreement, it is understood that British Aerospace would now join its partners in formally launching the airbus programme.

He explained that Mr Norman Lamont, Minister of State for Industry, would be meeting his French, German and Spanish colleagues shortly to endorse this British Aerospace agreement.

Without Government assistance, with the ATP (Advanced Transport) aircraft without Government assistance. That, said Mr Tebbit, was a tribute to the company and testimony to the fact that the launch aid for the A320 was adequate.

Mr Tebbit, in his statement, said that last November the Government had announced launch aid of £70m to assist with the development of the E4 version of the Rolls-Royce RB211-535 engine in the A320 project, and to collaborate with General Electric of the USA on larger civil engines.

These programmes (he continued) represent the core of a civil engine strategy based on international collaboration and dedicated to commercial success. The House will be informed when launch aid arrangements for the V2500 are finalised but as with the E4 scheme the Government will expect a real return on the taxpayer's investment.

In September 1982 launch aid of £41m to assist Westland in the development of its W30 civil helicopter and last month the Government announced £60m in launch aid towards Westland's civil version of the Anglo-Italian EH101 project for a helicopter for civil and naval use in the 1990s and beyond.

These investments will help to bring Westland into the expanding civil market and will be repaid with a return in real terms by a levy on sales.

British Aerospace have now decided to participate in the A320 programme and to launch the ATP. The Government has reached agreement with British Aerospace on the terms of launch aid for the A320. Launch aid of up to £250m repayable on terms agreed to yield a return in real terms on the Government's investment has now been agreed.

Taken together, these decisions expressed a clear commitment by the Government to support the efforts of the aerospace sector to



Carter-Jones: Ensure engine is acceptable

thereafter. Obviously some adjustment is necessary.

I assume that while he has set forth his views on the future of British civil aviation he has left aside, for the time being only, those important military projects about which we hope to hear from him sooner rather than later.

Mr Tebbit: We worked very closely with British Aerospace looking at the assumptions and the various assumptions made and seeing how we could provide backing through the launch aid in the manner which was most effective. That has been done and has enabled us to find that British Aerospace is happy to launch on the basis of £250m of launch aid.

It is a tribute to our vigorous private sector which requires less assistance from the Government

Wilkinson: BA confidence in Rolls engines

than the French or Germans. Yes, the lines in the White Paper relating to my department will clearly have to be amended to cover this project but total expenditure agreed for the Government will not increase.

I share his hopes that we will be able to see some of the military aircraft programmes go ahead as well, but I hope he will direct that question to the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Heseltine) when the times come.

Mr Bruce Millar (Glasgow, Govan, Lab): Since Rolls-Royce engines did not succeed in penetrating the earlier airbus, is it a condition of this help to the A320, or at least is there an understanding, that the V2500 engine will be available for the A320, and what are the respective timescales involved?

Mr Tebbit: I have spoken about this to my French and German colleagues. There is little doubt that the engine will be the one demanded by most customers for the A320.

Mr Bruce Millar: We are on the threshold of a historic opportunity which should not be missed. Would he ensure that adequate launch aid is available for the V2500, which is a major and constructive document reflecting the positive action and intention of Government to do within its power to combat boogymism.

We are confident (he said) that proper and effective implementation of the measures contained in the agreement would greatly reduce the problems.

He had asked the French minister for sport, for a full report of the incidents and would meet the chairman and secretary of the

Mr Lewis Carter-Jones (Eccles, Lab): Would he make sure that the V2500 is acceptable to the A320 without modification?

Mr Tebbit: I hope that British airlines will find the A320 the best on offer and that the Rolls-Royce engine will be the best to put on it.

Newcastle, the engine has been formally launched the consortium is entering into discussions with industry with a view to ensuring that the engine is on offer on the A320 from the beginning of the project.

Minister to have talks with FA officials

SOCCER RIOTS

The shame, disgrace and revolution felt by the House of Commons at yesterday's behaviour by English soccer followers in France was expressed in a Commons statement by Mr Neil Macfarlane, Minister for Sport.

He said he would discuss the incidents with Football Association representatives tomorrow (Friday).

Mr John Cunningham, Opposition spokesman on the environment, suggested in his reaction to the statement that the National Front was behind the incidents and had organized the attendance of their members.

Mr Macfarlane replied that he did not know whether the group were concerned but that he wanted to find out.

In his statement, Mr Macfarlane said that his officials would be holding further discussions to assess the extent of the damage caused by the disturbances.

Pre-match planning for the game by the Government and the French police and law and order authorities had been particularly extensive.

He had written to the French minister with responsibility for sport on February 10, stressing the need for adequate policing in and outside the stadium, and the need to deter offenders by resolute action by the police and corrective action by the FA.

Representatives of the English FA had visited Paris in January and met representatives of the French football authorities, the French police and the British embassy. Arrangements had been made for control of ticket sales, crowd segregation, sale of alcohol, porter travel routes and policing.

The European agreement on boogymism, reached last year on his initiative, was a major and constructive document reflecting the positive action and intention of Government to do within its power to combat boogymism.

We are confident (he said) that proper and effective implementation of the measures contained in the agreement would greatly reduce the problems.

He had asked the French minister for sport, for a full report of the incidents and would meet the chairman and secretary of the

Football Association tomorrow (Friday) afternoon for discussions. I shall be conducting a full appraisal of the incidents with the parties concerned (he said). I shall need to establish whether the measures agreed by European ministers were fully implemented on the day.

He also intended to continue to urge all concerned to do everything possible to get rid of these mindless louts and to urge European countries to use stringent penalties against convicted offenders to act as a deterrent.

Mr Cunningham: Everyone in Britain and particularly all those who hold our national game of football in affection and who in the widest sense value the reputation of this country must recoil in horror from yesterday's events in France, not only in the French stadium but elsewhere throughout the country.

Were not yesterday's events overshadowed by the attitude and information from the Football Association who acted responsibly by refusing to sell tickets unchecked to other than registered fans and authorized travel agents?

The FA themselves are not, in our view, to blame for what happened. It is true that the National Front was behind much of the ugly violence we witnessed and it is also true that they deliberately organized their members to attend this match in force.

Since 1980 we have seen similar events perpetrated by English soccer followers in the Welsh, Scottish, Danish, Dutch, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Italy and now France.

It is clear that Government ministers are failing. Were the special arrangements negotiated with the police and other authorities carried out as he requested, and what liaison, if any, was there with the French authorities?

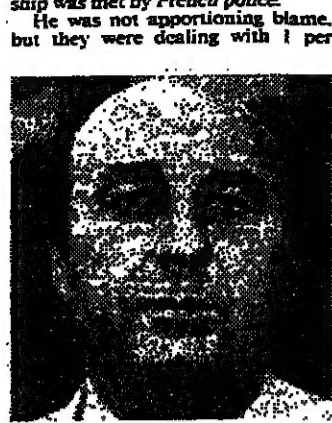
Is it not time to prevent these hooligans travelling abroad to besmirch the reputation of soccer? We need a new initiative, tougher controls to prevent innocent travellers and decent football fans and our European neighbours not only being insulted but injured. It demonstrates that we are dealing with a sports policy or football, but a matter of public order. The

Home Secretary should take charge of events.

Mr Macfarlane said that he did not know whether a minority group had been concerned in the incident but wanted to find out.

There had been the closest cooperation between the two police authorities on this side of the Channel and the other: British Transport Police had escorted fans on the trains to Dover and no alcohol had been on sale. At the request of the master of the French vessel taking them to France, the BT police had accompanied them across the Channel. The bars on the ship had been closed, but there had been some trouble on board. The ship was met by French police.

He was not apportioning blame, but they were dealing with 1 per



Pendry: There are no instant solutions

cent, or perhaps fewer who disrupted the enjoyment of 99 per cent.

Mr Hector Moore (Dumfries, C): Would he bear in mind the Scottish system under which drink is banned from football grounds?

Mr Macfarlane: The document drafted in Rotterdam touched upon that, and I am sure the Football Association there was close collaboration between the police on both sides of the Channel.

Mr William Bennon (Milton Keynes, C): We shall never get to the top of this problem, at home or abroad, until the perpetrators are sent to prison. Firing them does no good at all.

Pensioners' demands would cost £15,000m

PM's QUESTIONS

The proposals of the National Pensioners Convention for pensions increases would cost £15,000m, adding £24.30 a week to national insurance contributions for those on average male earnings, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said during question time exchanges in the Commons.

She was replying to Mr Neil Kinnock, the Leader of the Opposition, who had referred to a meeting Mrs Thatcher was shortly to have with a delegation from the convention.

When she sees Mr Jack Jones and his colleagues (said Mr Kinnock) will she be undertaking to scrap the fuel price increases and the housing benefit cuts?

Mrs Thatcher: No.

Mr Kinnock: That is disgraceful, especially since if Mrs Thatcher had not got rid of the link between pensions and earnings single pensioners would be £1.20 a week better off now and a married couple would be £2.50 better off. When is she going to stop thinking from the pensioners in this way?

Mr Thatcher: Housing benefit will cost £3,700m a year and goes to seven million households. The special fuel allowance is some £360m of which some £200m goes to pensioners. Both figures add vastly in excess of any by the Labour Government.

Mr Kinnock: In many, many respects what she alleges simply is

not true in her comparisons with the last Government. Does she in any case think that the pensioners' convention would be coming to see her, or demonstrating in London today, or constantly arguing upon all MPs that they need bigger pensions, if they thought what Mrs Thatcher was providing was anything like enough?

Mr Thatcher: I am not sure which figures Mr Kinnock is challenging, and I doubt whether he knows either. (Laughter.)

The proposals of the convention for pension increases would cost over £15,000m. That would add £24.30 a week to national insurance contributions for those on average male earnings.

Mr Kinnock is usually taking me to task for actually increasing national insurance contributions: now he is proposing to put it up on the working population by an intolerable amount. Does Mr Kinnock challenge any of those figures? (Conservative laughter and shouts of "game, set and match".)

● In reply to Mr Douglas Hoyle (Warrington, North, Lab): Mrs Thatcher acknowledged that new unemployment figures were disappointing, but pointed out that although the seasonally adjusted figure was up, the raw figure was down.

Some 300,000 people a month came off the unemployment register. Between January and February, she said, 338,000 people became unemployed and the numbers leaving unemployment were 346,000.

Next week's business

The main business in the House of Commons next week will be Monday's debate on the Rating and Valuation (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.

Tuesday: Debate on Expenditure White Paper.

Wednesday: Agricultural Holding Bill, second reading.

Thursday: Debate on estimates in relation to the NHS and the coal industry.

Friday: Private Member's motion. The main business in the House of Lords will be Monday's debate on the Rating and Valuation (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.

Tuesday: Housing and Building Control Bill, committee.

Wednesday: Debates on women's opportunities privatization; and on Vaccine Damage Payment Act.

Thursday: Presentation of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Bill, report.

Majority of staff have now signed

GCHQ DISPUTE

Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, said in the Commons at question time that she was grateful to the overwhelming majority of the staff at the Government Communications Headquarters, Cheltenham, for signing the necessary forms relinquishing their right to belong to a trade union.

The decision (she said) was urged upon us by the management of GCHQ. It was welcomed by some, but I realise it caused difficulty for others. I am very grateful to the overwhelming majority who signed the form at 90 per cent.

She was replying to Sir Anthony Meyer (Clwyd North West, C) who asked her to accept the admiration of the nation for the courage and determination with which she had won a great victory at Cheltenham. (Labour laughter.)

In its way (he added) it was no less significant than the victory which she won in the South Atlantic. Does she agree that the fruits of both victories will endure if she now showed a spirit of conciliation to the vanquished of both these issues?

Mr James Hamilton (Motherwell North, Lab): Will she reflect on the decision of the Government over GCHQ? If she will not take note of what was said to her by the TUC, will she take note of the many Tory MPs who have disagreed with her policy, particularly Mr Edward Heath?

Mrs Thatcher: I hope I have answered that before. There were differing views. I am grateful to those who signed. I believe the decision was right.

Parliament today
Commons (9.30): Debate on private Member's motion on the provision of homes.

Shipyard requiring less in state subsidies

ULSTER

Work carried out by Harland and Wolff on the Falklands floating port contract had enabled a £2.2m reduction to be made in assistance given by the terms of the contract.

Mr Peter Archer, chief Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, said unemployment in Northern Ireland was now more than 12,000, of whom more than 56,000 had been unemployed for a year or more.

Since being set up, Enterprise Ulster had employed more than 10,000 people and over half had gone into regular employment. 61 per cent of its budget was now spent directly on wages and salaries, most for those who would otherwise be on the dole.

Mr Butler intervened to say Enterprise Ulster had a good record, and he had to ensure the available resources went as far as possible and were put to the best use.

In its first year, it employed nearly 2,000 people. But for the same funds in real terms the action for community employment scheme provided jobs for 4,000 people. The provision for Enterprise Ulster would be £7m.

Commissioner repudiated

FOOD PRICES

The Government does not consider the EEC Commission's proposals for a revaluation of the green pound to be justified, Mr Michael Jopling, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said during Commons questions.

Mr Michael Colvin (Romsey and Waterbury, C) in view of the sharp fall in farm incomes in 1983, will he reject any other proposals that are likely to damage the competitiveness of British agriculture?

Will he deny reports in the press that No. 10 considers farmers to be a privileged sector of the economy and confirm once and for all that only the rest of British industry has done half as well, we would have

nothing to worry about in this country?

Mr Jopling: I repudiate the notion that the Government is mounting a campaign to undermine the capacity and the confidence of the agricultural community.

Dr Mark Hughes, an Opposition Spokesman on agriculture, (City of Durham, Lab): Does he accept the figure of Mr Christopher Tugendhat, EEC Commissioner, that food prices have been 5 per cent higher than they would otherwise need to be as a consequence of monetary compensation amounts.

Mr Jopling: I do repudiate the figure given by Mr Tugendhat also the food prices, I believe it is wrong. I reject the suggestion that the green pound is being used as a food tax.

Help for less-favoured areas

FARMING

About 28,000 British farmers in the less favoured areas would be eligible for higher capital grants, Mr Michael Jopling, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, told the Commons in reporting that the EEC Council of Agriculture Ministers had agreed to extend the areas which qualify for enhanced rates of capital grant.

Mr Edward de Caen (Taunton, C) said he had never known a time since he became an MP when morale in the farming industry had

been so low, nor when there had been such apprehension about the future.

In Mr Jopling's future negotiations on prices (he continued) it will be the starting point that it is essential to the British economy that we always maintain a prosperous and effective British agriculture.

Mr Jopling said he knew of the uncertainty in agriculture. He had urged a decision on restructuring of the common agricultural policy as soon as possible to end as much as he could of the uncertainty.

But there is (he said) grave overproduction and overspending on the budget and we have to do something about it.

Mr Jopling said later that he was not yet sure when payments would start in the marginal areas of the capital grant rates for the high hills. He thought it would be in the next financial year. The bill and compensatory amounts would be eligible for payment from January 1, 1985.

For farmers wishing to appeal against exclusion from the less favoured area classification, he would announce later the representation procedure.

Shinwell complains about smoking ban

HOUSE OF LORDS

Lord Shinwell, who is 99-years-old, told the House of Lords at question time that he was becoming "a bit aggravated" by questions aimed at "interfering with a civilized existence".

This followed a question by the Earl of Kinnoull (C) urging the Government to encourage transport authorities to ban smoking on buses.

Lord Glenarthur, Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, said it was a matter for the

bus operators, taking full account of public opinion whether to implement such a ban.

The Government (he added) welcomes the trend towards further restrictions on smoking in buses.

The Earl of Kinnoull: It was a national no smoking day yesterday and certain unnamed peers seemed ignorant of that fact. (Laughter.)

Lord Glenarthur: I would not like to be the person to turn to the Deputy Chief Whip (the Earl of Swinton) and say that he has just smoked his last cigar. (Laughter.)

Lord Shinwell: I am the last person to prevent any member asking a question, but I am becoming a bit aggravated by questions which aim at interfering with a civilized existence. (Laughter and cheers.)

Only the other day they tried to prevent members of the police force taking a drink occasionally. Now they want to stop smoking on buses. I never travel on a bus - I have the opportunity of using a car - but this is going a bit far.

Some people want to stop this going on. That is another example of aggravation. Lord Kinnoull often asks sensible questions but on this occasion it is completely uncivilized. (Laughter.)

£36m cost of military bands

By David Hewson

The Government is spending more than £36m a year on the upkeep of military bands more than a third of the Art's Council's total budget.

The figure was disclosed in a parliamentary reply to Mr Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, the former chairman of the GLC arts and recreation committee.

Mr Banks said yesterday: "This indicates the absurd level of values the Government has got in, spending so heavily on military bands when it is cutting back on arts expenditure through the abolition of the GLC and the metropolitan authorities."

The parliamentary reply reveals that £25.4m a year goes to the Army, which has about 2,500 band members in 78 bands. The Royal Marines, with 418 members in nine bands, get £8.1m, and the Royal Air Force, with 266 members in five bands, gets £2.85m.

Murder appeal

Norman Smith the computer student found guilty of murdering Miss Susan Renhard in the Derbyshire Peak District, is to appeal against his conviction.

Alliance victories in council by-elections

By Richard Evans

This year has seen Alliance success in local government by-elections at the expense of Conservatives and Labour.

A survey of council by-election results for January and February published in this week's *New Statesman* shows that the Liberals and SDP continue to attract far more support than opinion polls suggest and are winning seats from their two opponents.

Out of 34 contests the Liberals made four net gains and the SDP three, particularly encouraging for the SDP which has tended to fall behind its Alliance partner in winning seats.

Apart from achieving a victory in Plymouth, parliamentary case of Dr David Owen, SDP leader, the party also made gains on Warwickshire and Northumberland county councils, in the latter case depriving Labour of an overall majority.

The survey also discloses that the Conservatives, who fell behind Labour in the last quarter of 1983 after the election of Mr Neil Kinnock as leader have regained a four point lead.

The slight slump in Labour's fortunes can be partly explained by the special circumstances of

three council seats which they lost.

In Brent, the recent ugly scenes accompanying the party's loss of control on the council had a detrimental effect.

In Southwark, the party is still suffering from the humiliating parliamentary defeat at Bermondsey last year when the Liberals romped home.

In Chesterfield, where Liberals made a much publicized gain, personal factors were important.

Votes in the 27 by-elections where Alliance candidates stood.

Cons	Lib	SDP	Others
23,534	38.6%	21,040	32.7%
19,355	30.1%	450	0.7%

Results of the 34 by-elections in Jan and Feb

Party	Seats	Lost	Gained	New
Con	15	5	2	12
Lab	14	5	1	10
Lib	4	0	5	7
SDP	0	1	3	2
Ind	2	1	1	2

Voting for three-way contests in October, November and December.

Labour 33.7%
Conservative 33.1%
Alliance 31.4%

Call for law on rear seat belts

By Nicholas Timmins

Rear-seat belts in cars could save over two more lives a day and help to shorten waiting lists for hip transplants and hernias, the *British Medical Journal* said yesterday.

Legislation making the wearing of seat belts compulsory in the front seats of cars has been "a remarkable success story", the journal says in a leading article.

In the first eight months after legislation came into effect fatal and serious injuries fell by a quarter, a saving of 350 lives and 4,500 serious injuries.

The estimated overall saving on treating accident victims in the first year is likely to be about £120m - enough money to run four health districts for a year.

Adding rear-seat belts to the legislation could save the lives of about 135 rear-seat passengers in cars.

In addition, about 6 per cent of those fatally injured in the front seats of cars are injured by rear-seat passengers being thrown forward as missiles in crashes, and the provision of rear seat belts would allow an easy and cheap solution to carrying children safely in the back seat.

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Radioactive contamination of Sellafield beaches increasing, survey shows

By Pearce Wright, Science Editor

Evidence of a continuing increase in radioactive contamination of beaches and seas around the Sellafield nuclear waste processing plant in Cumbria has provoked fresh demands for tough government action.

The call came from MPs, trade unions, and Greenpeace, which last autumn discovered an accidental leak from Sellafield (formerly Windscale) during a protest that attempted to block a waste discharge pipe from Sellafield.

The plea to suspend all further discharges from the plant until a full independent inquiry has assessed the dangers and damage from the operations of British Nuclear Fuels, plant comes after a report published yesterday.

Prepared by the National Radiological Protection Board, it says radioactive waste is still being washed up on beaches around Sellafield. An initial drop in the amount of contaminated material being found has not continued.

The report concludes that if no solution is found within the

next month or so "the possibility of further action to clean the beaches should be considered."

The company is considering the report, which comes only two weeks after a reorganization of the board of British Nuclear Fuels and management of the Sellafield plant after two other government reports rebuked the company over leaks.

An accident at discharge last November is being investigated by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Efforts to cut radioactive discharges into the sea have been taken by the company and engineering modifications have been accelerated to ensure that it is impossible to repeat the last accident.

People have been warned to keep off the beaches near Sellafield. The new report says contaminated material continues to be found on beaches and estuaries and salt marshes.

Three possible explanations are offered by the scientists of the National Radiological Protection Board for the temporary

fall in the discovery of new radioactive wastes.

They are that new releases have been made from the plant; contaminated material already on the beach has been uncovered by winds and tide and that the prevailing weather has been ideal for bringing contaminated material in the sea to shore.

If the source of fresh pollution is caused by a reservoir of material in the sea, then only continued monitoring and removal of samples when they reach the shore or are observed beforehand will gradually eliminate the contamination.

The reports adds that the occurrence of a high proportion of low-level contamination debris in the last week of the survey, up to February 13, suggests there is a new source of contaminated items.

The report says the actual contact dose rates from these materials could be about 100 times higher than apparent readings on monitoring instruments. Someone could pick up an item and hold it for a sufficiently long time to sustain an appreciable dose to the skin.

Ten groups join 'access to files' campaign

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

A campaign to give people the right to see files held on them by doctors, hospitals, social workers, local authorities and others was launched by 10 organizations in London yesterday.

Under the umbrella of the newly formed "1984 Campaign for Freedom of Information", groups such as Shelter, Mind, the Patients' Association, and the National Council for Civil Liberties have joined ranks in an effort to change the law.

They are backing Mr Des Wilson, the 1984 campaign chairman, who is spearheading the lobby to give individuals a statutory right of access to files or records held on them and have a right to have inaccuracies corrected.

The groups will be supporting an "access to personal files" Bill shortly to be introduced in the Commons by Mr Christopher Smith, Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury, which would provide for such a statutory right.

The campaign wants parents and students over 16 to have access to their reports and records, "clients" of the social services to be able to inspect files kept on them by social workers, and patients to be able to see doctors' and hospital records.

Tenants of local authority housing and those on council waiting lists should also have a right of access to their files, they say.

Announcing the publication of a 10,000-word dossier containing case histories of injustices that have arisen from inaccurate personal files, Mr Wilson said: "The number of personal files is massive and the scope for inaccuracy and injustice so considerable that it has to be assumed that it occurs on a daily basis."

There was no guarantee, he said, whether file entries were fact or fiction.



Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour leader, raising a top hat in an impromptu dance with a member of the Age Exchange Theatre Company at the pensioners' rally.

Pensioners rally to war cry

By David Nickolson-Lord

Prolonged and bitter condemnation of government policy towards people aged over 65 came at the fifth national pensioners' rally in London yesterday.

More than 1,000 delegates were called on to recreate the wartime spirit of the fight against Hitler before moving on to a mass lobby of Parliament in support of a pension increase.

Leaders of the British Pensioners and Trade Unions Action Association, an umbrella grouping with strong

TUC links, later saw Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, and Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, before visiting Mrs Margaret Thatcher in Downing Street.

The delegation, including Mr Jack Jones, the former trade union leader who is the association's president, called for an immediate £8.75 increase in the single person's pension and £13.25 for a married couple.

The pensioners say that that is the amount they have lost since 1979 by the failure to

keep pace with inflation and tax changes.

Mr Jones was cheered loudly at the convention, held in the Central Hall, Westminster, when he described the 3.7 per cent pension increase last November as "an insult".

Mr Raymond Buckton, TUC president, said: "It is a disgrace to this country that pensioners should have to meet every year to lobby Parliament. What we should be doing is meeting every year to share friendship and enjoy ourselves."

Saboteurs advised to dress up as anglers

By Hugh Clayton

Hunt saboteurs are advised to disguise themselves as anglers when they try to disrupt fishing matches. The advice comes in the latest tactics booklet issued to the 3,000 members of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.

The association's decision to try to sabotage activities of the millions who go fishing as well as the 200,000 who hunt was disclosed in *The Times* last year.

Mr John Hale, the association's tactics officer, says in his latest advice that members who dress as fishermen should use weighted, unbreakable lines without hooks. "Take up a position as close as you can get to a real angler," he says. "Then keep on casting every few minutes with a big splash about four yards away from his float."

Despite a split which led to the resignation of some of its officers last year, the association is now firmly committed to sabotaging fishing as well as hunting and coursing.

The ruling committee makes clear in a bulletin to members that it has rejected the argument that attacks on angling will destroy Labour Party support for the abolition of hunting. The Labour manifesto for the last general election included a commitment to abolish hunting live prey with hounds.

The committee believes that Labour will probably drop its anti-hunting pledge whether the association disrupts fishing or not. "There is also little doubt that if and when the Labour Party drops its commitment to abolish bloodsports the association and its decision to campaign against angling will be wrongly blamed."

Mr Hale reports that one saboteur in the West Midlands has delayed anglers on the river bank by engaging them in long conversations about fishing. But Mr Hale favours disruption with sonic devices placed under water.

Right of training for all workers urged

By Our Education Correspondent

All adults in work should have a right to training in the same way as the French have by law and the Germans have by collective agreement. Mr John Cassels, director general of the National Economic Development Office, said yesterday.

There is a growing need for higher skills and competence in industry with the disappearance, in some cases at a startling speed, of less skilled jobs, he told the annual meeting of the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education in London.

It was important to ensure that vocational education and training met the needs of employers and individuals. More effort had to be switched

to innovation, and good communication between colleges, employers and trade unions had to be established through "local user groups".

"I think we have a very long way to go before learning is delivered to the customer in the way that really best meets the customers' needs," he said. "I am convinced that with ingenuity and imagination, colleges can open up many more flexible and accessible learning opportunities to the individual."

"The pace is being forced not by the arbitrary will of government or the Manpower Services Commission or anybody else but essentially by the pressure of international competition and the pace of technology change."

Edinburgh theatre proposed

A 1,500-seat theatre that could stage Broadway musicals or the grandest continental opera was proposed yesterday for the notorious "hole in the ground" site on Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, (Ronald Faux writes).

The ruling Conservative group on Edinburgh District Council has produced the plan. It will cost £14m which, the group says is less than half the cost of the last scheme for developing the site.

The group hopes that £2m will be raised by sponsorship and the rest of the cost divided between the council and the Government which had agreed to fund half of the original scheme.

Sixty key terms that budding historians must understand

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

The school inspectors (HMI) are expected to publish a document shortly on the teaching of history in school that will list 60 key historical terms which pupils aged 14 to 16 should know and which will emphasize the role of the history teacher in dealing with controversial issues.

The document, to be entitled *History 5 to 16*, is being written by Mr John Slater, staff inspector for history, who says that seven issues are indispensable to the study of contemporary history.

They are urban development, changing patterns of employment and unemployment, the multicultural society, the changing status of women, the impact of science and technology, global interdependence, and the open society. He argues that history has to deal with the issues over which society is divided. That itself is a controversial statement with which some people might disagree.

The publication of an HMI

document on history comes at a time when Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education and Science, is taking an interest in the subject. Earlier this month he had an element of national history should be part of every pupil's education up to the age of 16.

He said: "An element of national - by which I emphatically do not mean nationalistic



Sir Keith: History 'inescapable'.

history - is and inescapable part of any balanced school history course.

"History is indispensable to understanding the society we live in, to an awareness by pupils of the place of themselves, their families or communities in the developing story of the nation, a story which itself involves other nationalities and peoples."

The inspectorate does not disagree with Sir Keith. Mr Slater said: "Note the minister stressed understanding of shared values, not their acceptance."

Left-wing educationists are, however, critical of Sir Keith's words on this issue, saying that they are bound up with teaching patriotism and rest on the unspoken assumption of the glory of English institutions, government, and politics.

The document will spell out what the inspectors think history is, what its objectives and functions are, and will raise some of the issues involved in teaching it.

Amount of derelict land growing despite grants

By Hugh Clayton, Local Government Correspondent

There is more derelict land in England than in 1974 despite government spending of more than £100m on reclamation, an official survey has shown.

Although land has been reclaimed at about 2,000 hectares a year, factory and other closures in the recession have created much more dereliction in some areas.

There were 45,683 hectares of derelict land in England in 1982, compared with 43,273 hectares in 1974. Ministers have reserved £74m for reclaiming derelict land in the coming financial year, compared with £75m in 1983-84. Some of the money is paid only when industry agrees to meet most of the cost.

Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, said on Tuesday that the Government was to pay £15m in the coming year towards immediate private development of land reclaimed by councils.

He added that the private sector was expected to contribute more than £80m.

"The survey shows that between 1974 and 1982 in England 17,000 hectares were restored to beneficial use," Mr Jenkin added in a parliamentary written reply. "This represents the equivalent of 30 per cent of the derelict land identified in 1974 as worth reclamation."

Survey of Derelict Land (Room C 13, Department of the Environment, Marsham Street, London SW1). £5.90 [summary free].

Derelict land in England		
	1974 (in hectares)	1982
North	9,411	7,307
North-west	8,016	10,042
Yorkshire and Humberside	5,451	5,431
W Midlands	4,667	5,787
E Midlands	5,171	5,198
E Anglia	1,783	804
S West	6,415	6,635
Gr London	324	1,954
Rest of SE.	2,036	2,525

Cambridge to reform admissions

By Paul Flather of the *Times Educational Supplement*

Cambridge University colleges are to follow Oxford and study changes in the ways they admit undergraduates in an effort to produce a simpler and fairer system.

One scheme to be investigated would involve using the present S-level (scholarship level) examination, which can be taken simultaneously with A levels, as equivalent to a special Cambridge entrance examination.

College tutorial representatives are meeting today to finalize the terms of reference for a new working party, headed by the vice-chancellor, Sir John Butterfield, to study the feasibility of moving the entrance examination to the fifth or sixth term in the sixth form.

Many tutors appear to accept that the examination taken just after A levels, the so-called seventh term entry, is about to wither away, especially as Oxford has already abolished the seventh term examination.

Oxford has reformed its entrance procedures so that applicants can now either take the special examination in the fourth term of the sixth form, or be admitted on the basis of A levels, an interview and a school report.

Cambridge tutors, however, are worried that the fourth term is too early to judge potential in students. But any later test might interfere with A level work, and also worry other universities, who have to wait for Oxbridge to take its pick of the brightest students.

How to turn this newspaper into four £10 notes.

1

How to turn this newspaper into four £10 notes.

(a) Take this page to make a draught excluder for your door

(b) Cut it in half

(c) Fold twice as shown

(d) Cut to length, and tack to bottom of door

2

How to turn this newspaper into four £10 notes.

(a) Take this page to stop that draught through your letter box

(b) Fold along the dotted lines

(c) Refold the page like a concertina, as shown

(d) Trim to length, and tack over letter box, so letters can still go through

3

How to turn this newspaper into four £10 notes.

(a) Block up unused keyholes

(b) Count how many unused keyholes you have on exterior doors

(c) Cut out keyhole shapes, or simply crumple up small pieces

(d) Bung them up

4

How to turn this newspaper into four £10 notes.

(a) Block up UNUSED chimneys

(b) Crumple up some pages

(c) You'll need a few!

(d) Cram them up the chimney to stop expensive heat escaping

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Style. We've persuaded the people who've got it to share it. This week's Punch is a double issue. It includes a 32 page magazine on Style. George Melly, Alan Whicker, Alan Coren, Barry Humphries, Ned Sherrin, Libby Purves. You can have Style for just 65p. With regular Punch included at no extra cost.

Punch & STYLE

Getting the idea? All those little draughts around your home are more than just a slight discomfort.

They're a severe pain in your wallet. Draughts could be putting £40 or more on your annual fuel bill. But you don't have to cut up your favourite newspaper to cut them out.

Your local hardware store is full of

inexpensive and easy-to-install draught-proofers, for every draughty nook and cranny round your home.

The Energy Efficiency Office has produced a free booklet which shows you how to save hundreds of pounds by insulating your home completely.

For instance, cavity wall insulation can save you at least £50 a year. So it won't

just make your house cosier, but add to its value and pay for itself in a few years.

If you'd like to shave a few £10 notes off your fuel bill, drop a note to the Energy Efficiency Office, FREEPOST, P.O. Box 100, West Sussex RH16 1TY, for your free copy of 'Make the most of your heating'. It won't even cost you the price of a stamp.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFICE

Uncertainty over future of Israel treaty after Gemayel talks in Syria

From Robert Fisk, Beirut

President Gemayel of Lebanon returned to Beirut last night after holding a further four hours of what he called "excellent" talks with President Assad of Syria. But he made no formal announcement of abrogation of the unofficial peace treaty between Lebanon and Israel, and he cancelled a press conference without giving any reason soon after his last meeting with the Syrian leader.

Mr Gemayel was prepared to tear up the May 17 military withdrawal agreement with Israel, in return for some commitment by Syria that it would withdraw its Army from Lebanon when the last Israeli soldiers left the country.

It was unclear last night whether Mr Gemayel extracted such a promise from the Syrians, though Mr Assad himself appeared pleased with the talks, and Damascus Radio had broadcast all day reports of

how Lebanon would be returning to its "Arab identity", a euphemism for abrogation of the Lebanon-Israeli accord.

The talks in Damascus had taken place against a curious background. Overnight, an American warship, the USS W. S. Sims, had fired 20 shells into the Druze-held hills above Beirut after artillery rounds had fallen near the US Ambassador's residence at Yarz. The naval bombardment, a US military spokesman later said, had been carried out "to protect American lives".

A few hours later, Mr Walid Jumblatt, the Druze leader who has demanded an end to all American naval action, turned up in Beirut for the first time in 15 months to denounce President Gemayel and to insist that the Lebanese leader be "put on trial" for ordering the Lebanese Army to shell Muslim sectors of the capital.

The Lebanese President can afford to ignore such statements, provided he really has reached an understanding with President Assad. His problem will be to sell any new agreements with Syria to his erstwhile Phalangist supporters, many of whom now feel betrayed by the Lebanese President's visit to Damascus.

Mr Gemayel's father, Pierre, the Phalange Party's founder and hitherto one of the most outspoken of the country's right-wing leaders, has surprisingly come out in support of his son's journey to Syria.

Although he had in the past praised the agreement with Israel, Mr Pierre Gemayel is now describing it as "already dead", claiming that an understanding with Syria was essential since the pact with Israel had failed to remove foreign armies from Lebanon.

French troops to leave Lebanon soon

From Diana Geddes, Paris

A withdrawal from Beirut of the 1,500 French troops - the last remaining contingent of the four-nation multinational force - is understood to be imminent after the rejection by the United Nations Security Council of the French proposal to replace the multinational force by a UN force.

Unofficial government sources here emphasized yesterday that "France alone cannot act as a substitute for the international organizations whose role it is to help reestablish peace in Lebanon". The three other members of the multinational force, Britain, the United States and Italy, have

already withdrawn their forces. The only official reaction yesterday to the UN vote was from the Foreign Office, which said that France would not take any "precipitate decision" as to the eventual withdrawal of its contingent, and that such a withdrawal take place "with dignity".

Dilemma over policing Beirut UN seeks a way round veto

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

The search for a new formula to give the United Nations an expanded role in Lebanon was under way last night after a Soviet veto in the Security Council which struck down the French initiative for a UN peacekeeping operation in Beirut.

After weeks of intensive and intricate negotiations, the Soviet Union ultimately disregarded the international consensus for a UN in Lebanon. Only the Ukrainian representatives joined Moscow in opposition. The 13 members of the council who approved the French measure vowed to try again.

Officially the Soviet Union had presented several untenable conditions for its consent to a force. In the Security Council debate, it said that the draft resolution failed to extract guarantees from the Americans that artillery shelling and reconnaissance flights from its warships off the Lebanese coast would cease before the arrival of UN troops. While the United States ultimately decided to disengage completely from the area, it would have been unwise for it to have acceded to Moscow's dictates.

The two underlying reasons for Moscow's veto were, first, its reluctance to give the West an alternative peacekeeping force that would take away attention from the failure of its own mission. A UN force would have meant diplomatic victory for the West, a gift Moscow was not about to give away.



Soviet block: Mr Oleg Troyanovsky, Soviet ambassador, vetoing in the Security Council a UN force for Beirut.

Second, the Soviet Union had no intention of approving a measure that might interfere with its serious, calculated control of Lebanon's political and military landscape. A UN force in Moscow's eyes would at the very least give the Government of President Gemayel an unnecessary moral

boost and at most provide a healing touch to perhaps an untimely recalculation.

As long as it is in Moscow's interests to oppose a UN force, it will continue to do so, the belief that it could be shamed into giving its approval proved to be a miscalculation.

Fierce fighting as Iran attacks again

By Our Foreign Staff

Iran said it had launched another offensive on the southern front of the Gulf War on Wednesday night and fierce fighting was raging in the area.

The attack had inflicted heavy casualties on Iraqi troops and a number of prisoners had been taken, the Iranian National News Agency reported in a dispatch monitored in London.

It said Iranian forces had seized a strategic bridge and were erecting a 160ft bridge across a canal after achieving most of their objectives.

The agency quoted a joint staff communiqué as saying a Soviet-made Iraqi fighter had been shot down. This brought to seven the number of Iraqi warplanes shot down in a week. Iraq reported sinking seven

"enemy naval targets" at the head of the Gulf yesterday as Iran announced. The surge in fighting, confirmed by Iraq, was near the southern port of Basra. An Iraqi military spokesman said the Iranians had gained footholds in three positions but were being encircled.

The Iraqi military spokesman said the Iraqi Air Force and Navy attacked the seven vessels as they tried to enter the southern Iranian port of Bandar Khomeini.

● PARIS: A French Government loan to Iraq of about \$500m (£125m) designed to help the war-torn country to finance civil debt repayments in 1984, was confirmed by MME Edith Cresson, the Trade Minister, yesterday. (Diana Geddes writes).

A million strike on Peru farms

Lima (AP) - More than a million farmers began a three-day strike across Peru yesterday, threatening to block food supplies to cities in protest over the Government's agricultural policies.

The strike organizer, Señor Felipe Huamán, head of the National Agrarian Confederation (CNA), said the strike was nationwide except for 12 provinces under control of the military.

Dhaka riot

Dhaka (Reuters) - Two people, one of them a 13-year-old boy, were killed and at least 150 were injured during an eight-hour general strike called by the opponents of the Bangladesh military regime.

Grenada pledge

St George's (AP) - President Reagan has personally assured Grenada that the United States will complete the island's international airport that Cuba was building before the US intervention.

Sect arrest

Jakarta - Peter Curtis, aged 40, an American teacher suspected of being a leading member of the Children of God Sect, has been arrested. The Indonesian Information Minister said further measures would be taken against key members of the Sect.

Out of race

Washington - Senator Ernest Hollings, of South Carolina, has dropped out of the Democratic presidential nomination after winning only 4 per cent of the vote in the New Hampshire primary.

Cop is robber

Tokyo (AP) - An assistant police inspector carrying a toy gun robbed a bank of 10m yen (about £38,500) in cash, but he was arrested after being charged by two bank clerks. Hiroshi Nagata, aged 42, said he planned the robbery because he could not repay a housing loan.

British woman among Unita hostages

By Richard Dowden

The Red Cross in Geneva has confirmed that one of the 17 Britons kidnapped by Unita guerrillas in northern Angola and now being force-marched nearly 700 miles south is a woman, and two of the men are nearly 60 years old.

Journalists who have travelled with Unita say they get up before dawn, march until midday, rest for two hours and then march till dark trying to cover 30 or 40 miles a day.

A spokesman for Mining and Technical Services Ltd (MATS), the company which employs the Britons, said yesterday that it was not the company's intention to release the names of the hostages.

The spokesman for the International Committee for the Red Cross in Geneva said yesterday that although they have a complete list of names of the missing Britons, details of some of them were missing.

A spokesman for Intraco, the British-based company which services mining equipment in Angola, confirmed that one of its engineers, Mr Tony Beer, was pre-independence elections in the territory.

One of the parties in the MPC is Mr Andreas Shipango's Swapo. Democrais, a group which broke away from the Swapo mainstream after a dispute between Mr Shipango and Mr Nujoma. Mr Shipango has long called for Mr Toivo's release, claiming that he would side with him rather than Mr Nujoma.

It appears that South Africa may be hoping Mr Toivo could provide an alternative attraction for Swapo supporters, thereby weakening Mr Nujoma's position.

Mr Toivo, who will be 60 later this year, was imprisoned in 1968 after being convicted of acts of terrorism with the intent of overthrowing the present government.

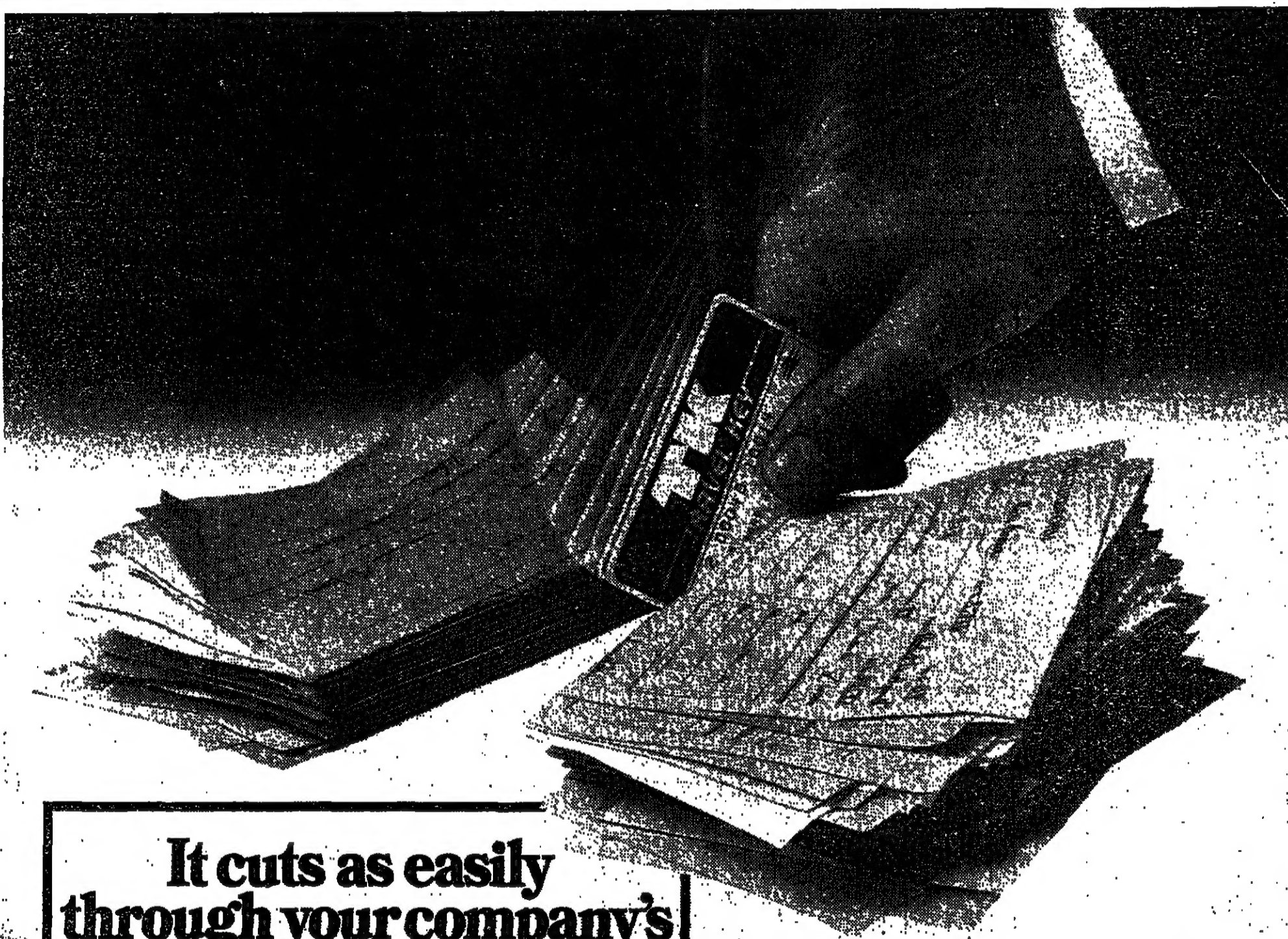
South Africa releases Swapo co-founder

From Michael Hornsby, Johannesburg

Mr Herman Toivo Ja Toivo, often spoken of as "the father of the liberation struggle" in Namibia (South-West Africa), has been released from prison four years before the end of a 20-year sentence on terrorism charges, according to informed sources.

Mr Toivo, a co-founder with Mr Sam Nujoma of Swapo (South-West Africa People's Organization), was moved earlier this week from Robben Island, South Africa's island jail in Table Bay, to a prison in Namibia.

His release had been demanded by a group of political parties in Namibia called the Multi-Party Conference (MPC), whose credibility South Africa is anxious to boost, as a competitor to Swapo in possible



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Or dial 100 and ask for Freephone 2799 (during normal office hours).



This is the age of the train

"That's a very original opinion. Didn't I read it originally in The Economist?"

"In the hope of founding a new peasant industry, the Philippine government is sponsoring pilot plants for rearing worms on animal slurry specifically for their meat. And the aim is not to produce animal feed but human food. Dried into powder, the scheme's promoters say, the meat from this variety of worm... makes a delicious addition to beefburgers. They have their eyes on Japan as an export market. Lucky Japan."

"If an opera house is to have a purpose, it needs to commission new works and submit half-forgotten ones to the test of fresh ears. If the verdict is unfavourable, so be it. Opera lovers should welcome disappointments. They are the everyday failures against which the great evenings can be measured."

"Imagine, for instance, where Marks & Spencer would be today if it had said 20 years ago that it wanted to concentrate on selling pullovers and oranges. The comparison is not fanciful."

In retailing then, as in financial services now, future growth belongs to those who offer what their customers want, not just what they think is good for them. There is no doubt that the customers of building societies want them to become more like banks."

"Since income tax was introduced as a temporary measure to pay for the Napoleonic wars, the tax code has evolved as a hodgepodge. Multinational companies are taxed as though they were Victorian textile mills: husbands are still in charge of their wives' tax affairs. Everywhere the guiding principles are lawyers' past precedents rather than economists' contemporary logic."

"Under his peculiar Victorian helmet, your ordinary London bobby is racist, sexist, bored, aimless and quite often drunk. Despite this, only 10% of Londoners completely lack confidence in their police. Most citizens seem not to expect very high standards in a tough and brave job, and are satisfied with the service the police provide."

"Neanderthals were not the idiots of legend. Their brains were as large as, if not larger than, those of today's Nobel prize winners; they buried their dead (though a suggestion that they put flowers on their graves now looks dubious); and for about 80,000 years they thrived in Europe and Asia."

"New research predicts that even a limited nuclear exchange in the (heavily industrialised) northern hemisphere could ignite enough fires to pump hundreds of millions of tons of soot into the atmosphere in a matter of days. That would blot out virtually all sunlight. Freezing cold would then kill off plants, animals and possibly even the healthy human survivors."



Every week, The Economist brings you a feast of information and opinion.

It's witty, wise, opinionated, eclectic, influential and sometimes, even eccentric. Just like a good dinner party. Without the washing up.

The Economist

Born again Golf.



We haven't improved it beyond all recognition.

After ten years we've decided to replace the Golf.

With a Golf.

A totally new car with more than a passing resemblance to the old one.

We pondered long on the wisdom of this.

We created dozens of new, futuristic shapes. And had some made-up into full scale models.

They were exciting.

But they weren't Golfs.

They wouldn't have worked as well. And that's where we draw the line.

The new line.

So we started from scratch and built a better Golf.

A seven inches longer, two inches wider and a great deal more comfortable Golf.

(Imagine an airline seat with that much more space around it.)

A Golf that carries a third more luggage. And still has room for a twelve gallon petrol tank. Three more than the old one.

The new shape

The new Golf has curves where the old one had edges.

You'll notice the body is a little smoother all over.

The windscreen is raked. The quarter-lights are flush.

And the rain channels are closer to the roof line.

Evidence that our designers have at last bowed to fashion?

Not at all.

It's evidence that the Golf now has the lowest drag factor in its class, 0.34.

The new engines.

This new streamlining is part of the solution to a little conundrum we set ourselves:

How to make the Golf go faster, further on less fuel.

The next step was to build two new engines, a 1.3 and a 1.6.

Both deliver around 5 bhp more than the old engines.

Yet restrain consumption as if taking on inflation single-handed.

At a steady 56mph the 1.3 does 52.3 miles to the gallon (10 mpg better than before).

Coincidentally, the 1.6 also does 52.3 (nearly 8 mpg better).

But if your desire for thrift is still unsatisfied, there's a one litre petrol engine and a diesel version (65.7 mpg).

Meanwhile, the new GTi with its fuel injected 1.8 is on the way.

Order now if you want to catch one.

New options, new brakes.

With the 1.3 engine you can choose

the Formel 'E' (short for efficiency) pack. It includes an economy gear.

And a fuel consumption indicator that constantly reminds you of the cost of putting your foot down.

Try putting it down on the brake pedal instead.

All models now have direct acting servo brakes.

You don't have to push so hard. And the response is more immediate.

The new ride.

The handling of the old Golf was, by common consent, unbeatable.

And so it was until we told our engineers to beat it.

They lengthened the wheel-base by three inches.

(The longer it is the smoother the ride.)

And uprated the rear suspension we developed for our big saloons, the Passat and Santana.

Over tarmac, cross country and cobbles, and in tortuous cornering tests, the new Golf performs better than all other cars in its class.

We also improved on two other factors that can smooth your journey.

We cut the noise level by half.

And developed a new heater that blends warm air (rather than just relying on hot water from the radiator).

It will never vary by more than 2° from the temperature you select.

So what's old?

With all this innovation you may be relieved to hear some things haven't changed.

We still guarantee our bodies against rusting through for six years, and the paint-work for three.

We still offer you no option on rear seat belts. You've got to have them, so belt up.

We still build every Volkswagen around a steel safety cell. With crumple zones at both ends.

We still believe the less you see of us the better. The service intervals on the Golf are now 10,000 miles.

And still, no car in the world holds its value better than a Volkswagen.

From such a heritage we proudly announce the born again Golf.

A new arrival. Without a rival.



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هكذا من الأصل

France braced for mass demonstrations as industrial unrest spreads

From Diana Geddes, Paris

The wave of industrial unrest spread further through France yesterday as banks remained closed throughout the day due to strike action.

Wine-growers in the south went on the rampage, causing hundreds of thousands of pounds of damage and several injuries, and unions representing nearly five million workers in the public service sector announced plans for strikes next week after the breakdown of talks on pay with the Government.

Paris is bracing itself today for a mass demonstration by the five main miners' unions in protest against threatened pit closures and the loss - according to the unions - of 28,000 jobs over the next four years.

The demonstration follows last week's 48-hour strike, the first national miners' strike in 21 years.

On Sunday the parents of pupils in the predominantly Roman Catholic private schools will hold the last of five demonstrations against government proposals to "harmonize" the private school system, representing 15 per cent of pupils, with the state system.

The Government already pays for virtually the whole cost of private schooling and feels it should have more control over how the money is spent.

Last Sunday nearly 300,000 demonstrators marched

through Lille in defence of the continuation of the special privileges enjoyed by private schools. The organizers are expecting up to 500,000 in Versailles this Sunday.

There are tentative signs that the Government may have taken heed of their protest and may be willing to modify its already watered-down proposals.

The shock waves from the nine-day lorry drivers' dispute, which ended last week, continue to be felt. Negotiations opened yesterday between the Government, the road haulage federations and the unions representing the employed drivers on a two remaining key issues - a reduction in the tax on fuel and greater flexibility in working hours.

The Ministry of Transport has announced a meeting of all EEC transport ministers on March 22 to discuss ways of facilitating the passage of European frontiers by different types of vehicles.

In the public service sector, government proposals designed to bring the increase in workers' wages over the past two years into line with the rise in prices have been rejected as unacceptable by most of the unions involved.

The independent Force Ouvrière has announced a 48-hour strike on March 8 and 9,

while the Communist-controlled CGT, the left-wing Fen (representing a majority of teachers) and other independent unions have called for a 24-hour strike on March 8, backed by mass street demonstrations.

Unions representing all Air France personnel are also planning a 24-hour strike on March 8 over alleged cuts in real wages. Yesterday's strike by bank employees was likewise prompted by grievances over pay and also by union fears of the loss of more than 50,000 jobs in banking over the next three years.

In the Languedoc-Roussillon area in the south-west, wine growers showed what happens when the law tries to intervene too directly with their "right to protest". More than 2,000 stormed the court in Carcassonne after four of their number had been fined 2,000 francs (about £170) and given one-month suspended prison sentences for having hijacked lorries carrying imported wine which they emptied over the road.

After breaking the court's windows and trying to set the building alight, the incensed wine-growers went on the rampage throughout the region during Wednesday and Thursday night, ransacking two railway stations, a town hall, a local tax office and three toll booths.



Tearful witness: The stepdaughter of Rolando Galman, alleged killer of Benigno Aquino, yesterday testified that Mr Galman had been taken from their home by a Philippine Air Force colonel four days before the opposition leader was murdered (AFP reports from Manila).

Roberta Masibay, aged 16, (above) also told the board of inquiry that her mother, missing since January 29, told her before leaving home that she had been summoned by a General Ver.

General Fabian Ver, Armed Forces Chief of Staff, later said this was an "outrageous lie."

University spurns gift of man linked to Nazi child-killing

From Michael Binyon, Bonn

Keil University has turned down a bequest of Dm500,000 (£125,000) because the former professor who left the money had been involved in the killing of handicapped children under the Nazis.

Professor Werner Catel, who died in 1981 aged 86, left the money to fund scholarships in medical and scientific research. But a university spokesman said the senate unanimously rejected the bequest, believing moral reservations about his activities before 1945 were more important than the money.

From 1939 Herr Catel had evaluated official reports on "severe hereditary illness" and

decided whether thousands of mentally and physically handicapped children should be classified as worthless and killed. In 1960 he resigned his post as head of the university children's clinic when his involvement in the "euthanasia" programme became known.

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that 800 members of the former Waffen-SS have arranged to hold their controversial annual reunion in May in Bad Harzburg, a town associated with the Nazi-led Harzburg Front that rallied opposition to the government of Dr Heinrich Brüning in 1931.

On Tuesday the trial in Zweibrücken of a couple said to have distributed a board game based on the wartime gassing of Jews was stopped after a week and a new trial ordered because of inconsistencies in the evidence of a handwriting expert.

Hans-Günther Fröhlich, a former police officer, and his girl-friend were accused of inciting racial hatred by designing a game that circulated in schools last year. It consisted of moving counters marked with the points of a Star of David, named after concentration camps, into a central square labelled gas chamber.

Regime attacks Polish lawyer

From Our Correspondent, Warsaw

Poland's foremost human rights lawyer, Mr Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, was attacked sharply in the government-controlled press yesterday for writing an open letter to General Jaruzelski, the Polish leader, accusing the authorities of "dangerous" and "cynical" violations of the law to cover up the investigation into the fatal beating of a Warsaw schoolboy.

The attack, published in most national dailies, claimed that Mr Sila-Nowicki had lied and slandered the State Prosecutor's office to stir up political emotions. The article said that Mr Sila-Nowicki "depicted Poland as a country ruled by police provocation", and hinted that legal action might be taken

against the opposition lawyer for his "slandorous" accusations.

Mr Sila-Nowicki, the leading member of Poland's small community of human rights lawyers and a representative on the National Lawyers' Council, wrote to General Jaruzelski after police arrested another opposition lawyer, Mr Maciej Bednarkiewicz, in January, on charges of aiding a deserter from the riot police and trying to induce him to steal a police radio and reveal information about the security forces.

Mr Bednarkiewicz was the lawyer for the mother of Grzegorz Przemyski, a 19-year-old Warsaw secondary school

student who died of internal injuries in May, 1983 after allegedly being beaten while in police custody.

In the widely-published reply to Mr Sila-Nowicki's letter, a pro-government journalist, Jerzy Nowomieski, wrote that "any gestures of a humanitarian nature towards people as rabid as Bednarkiewicz or Sila-Nowicki are pointless".

In his letter to General Jaruzelski, Mr Sila-Nowicki wrote that the charges against Mr Bednarkiewicz were a fabricated provocation, designed to prevent him from presenting evidence that Mr Przemyski was fatally beaten by two policemen.

Troops alerted to run Madrid trains

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Soldiers doing their national service on the railways will be ordered today to help to run the Madrid Underground if the workers persist with their second strike this week.

Spain's Socialist Government gave a warning of the use of troops after railway staff, among whom the Communists are in a majority, decided not to back down on wage demands. They want a 10 per cent increase this year, but the Government has set a 6.5 per cent limit for the public sector.

Members of the Socialist General Workers' Union, however, are expected to work alongside the servicemen to maintain a skeleton rush-hour service.

The Government of Señor Felipe González yesterday faced social unrest on three other fronts. In Barcelona and surrounding Catalan towns, shopkeepers responded to a call not

to open their premises in a protest against a wave of shop robbery. The conservative party which forms Catalonia's autonomous government backed the protest.

The shopkeepers say that the Socialist reforms limiting the time that accused people can be held in jail before trial has put habitual criminals back on the streets sooner.

For the fourth time in a fortnight, ground staff of the Iberia airline staged peak-hour stoppages three times yesterday. They are protesting against economies by the state airline which would hit salaries and benefits.

A national strike call was well heeded yesterday by Spain's 400,000 textile workers for a second consecutive day.

Four arrested: Four Spaniards were detained yesterday only hours after the killing of a 28-year-old Frenchman in Hendaye, just across the Franco-Spanish border.

Eye-witnesses at Hendaye railway station, where the Frenchman worked, had reported seeing two gunmen fleeing towards the border.

ETA was immediately suspected of a second violent death yesterday when a retired senior police inspector was shot in Victoria in the Basque region. The ammunition used was of the kind habitually used by the organization. Three young men penetrated the retired policeman's home, despite precautions he had taken against admitting strangers.



Señor González: Facing unrest on four fronts.

Punjab ban imposed on scooters

From Kuldip Nayar, Delhi

The Government banned the use of motorcycles and scooters through Punjab yesterday. Unidentified Sikh terrorists have been riding these vehicles and escaping after killing Hindus.

In the past seven days nearly 50 Hindus died as the result of a renewed spurt of terrorist activity.

Police have surrounded the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar after Sikh extremists killed four Hindus with an Indian Army grenade on Wednesday. The police believe the extremists took shelter in the temple after the killings. The curfew on Wednesday continues in the town.

A bank in Tran Taran, near Amritsar, was looted by Sikhs who escaped with half a million rupees. Schools and colleges in main towns of Punjab are shut and tension is rebuilding.

Uganda treason trial told MP visited guerrillas

From Charles Harrison, Nairobi

A Uganda opposition MP, Dr Yoweri Kyesimira, who is on trial in Kampala for treason, is alleged by a prosecution witness to have visited a guerrilla camp near Kampala in 1982 and congratulated the underground Uganda Freedom Movement on the success of an attack on an army barracks in Kampala.

Miss Samali Bamutire said she was with guerrillas who attacked the barracks. She surrendered later.

Dr Kyesimira, once professor of economics at Makerere University, Kampala, has been under arrest since 1982. He denies the charge of treason, which carries a death sentence.

Russian backlash on airliner

From John Best, Ottawa

The Soviet Union has once more sought to pin responsibility for last year's Korean airliner disaster on the United States, claiming that it resulted from a "provocative mission" organized by the Americans' intelligence gathering.

In a harshly worded statement in Montreal this week Mr Boris Ryjenkov, executive secretary of the Soviet delegation to the International Civil Aviation Organization, rejected an ICAO report which found a Soviet interceptor fighter at fault in the catastrophe.

All 269 people on board when the aircraft was shot down over Soviet territory on September 1 on a flight from Alaska to Seoul.

Mr Ryjenkov's statement, issued as ICAO's 33-member council met to discuss the incident, appeared to dash any lingering hopes that the Soviet Union would agree to pay compensation to the families of the victims.

A number of countries, including Canada and the United States, have demanded the compensation, but the Russians have never formally accepted the claims.

Mr Ryjenkov alleged that flight 007's incursion into Soviet air space was a "pre-planned intelligence operation", and that the airliner's crew knew that they were deviating from their proper flight course.

Moreover, American and Japanese air traffic controllers had taken no "corrective steps", even though they knew that the airliner had strayed into Soviet air space.

Mr Ryjenkov's declaration was at variance with a report released by ICAO last December, which found that flight 007 was off-course because of a navigational error.

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Four of industry's bright new hopes. At 16, they thought they had no hope at all.

At the age of 16, these kids found themselves with two options.

They could continue at school, with the prospect of further attempts at 'O' levels. Or join the dole and risk going nowhere on £23 a week.

Taking the second option led them to a third. The chance of an education in computers at an Information Technology Centre.

It paid £25 a week, almost a 10% rise. And with their vast experience of Space Invaders, they were more than qualified to meet the ITEC's BBC Microcomputers.

But there's no need to play the irate tax payer. They didn't have to burden the State much longer.

Wendy Thompson, Tyneside. Even at her ITEC, they say Wendy was a bit of a wild one.

If something captures her imagination, however, she'll give it 100%. And with the BBC Micro, she became seriously hooked on computing.

Not only was she rapidly employed for her newly discovered programming and data processing skills, she was soon writing her own specialised programs.

For instance, she has now written a program which will teach backward children to spell.

Yet, she doesn't have an 'O' level to her name.

Wilmot Jeremiah, London. After a year at ITEC, Wilmot was snapped up by a company called Digitalent.

He had learned how to program a computer. How to take it apart. And what exactly made it tick.

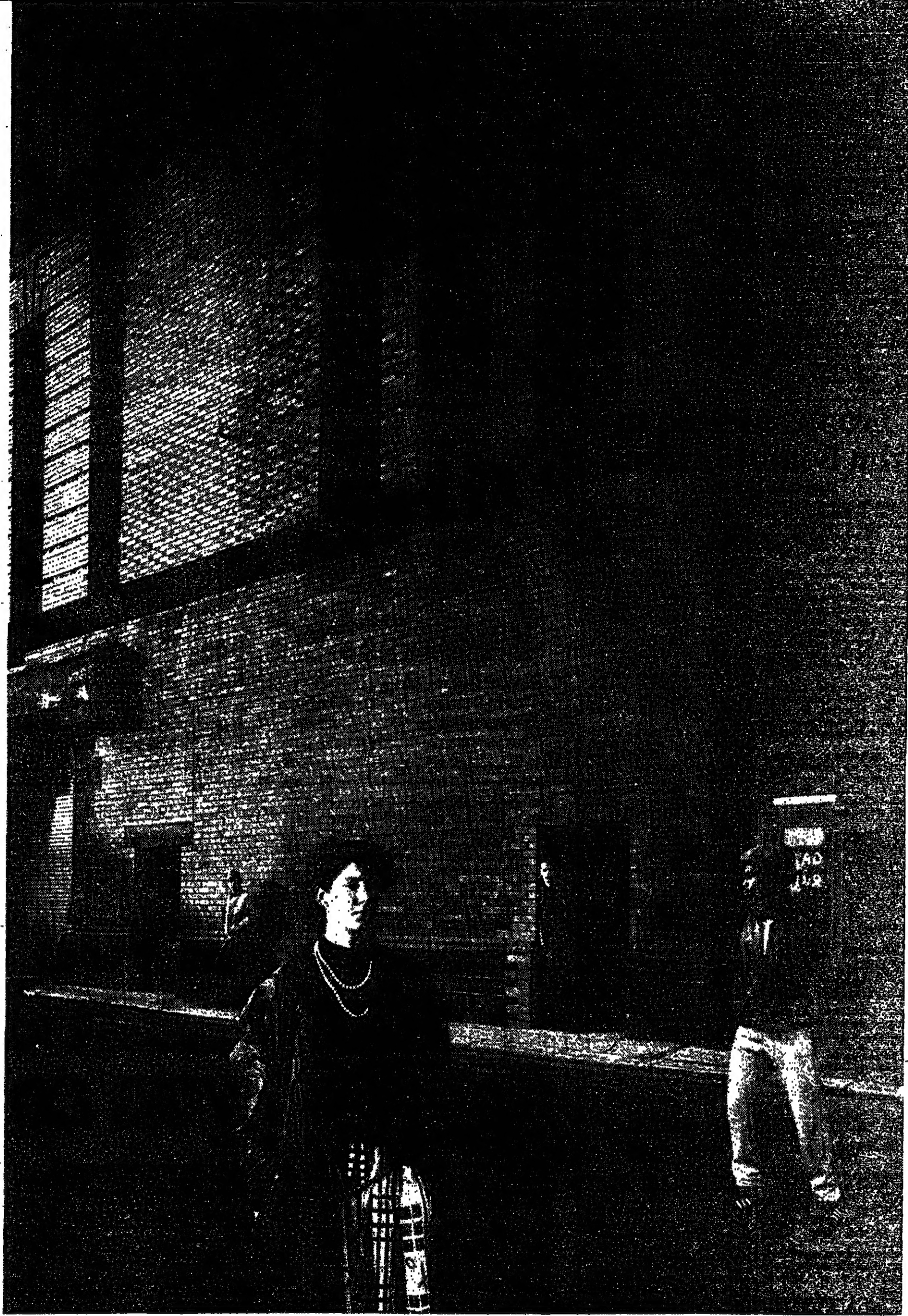
Today, he's helping to develop a music synthesizer which will be able to receive its sound repertoire from a BBC Micro. And at well under £1,000, it will compete with synthesizers costing over £10,000.

Chris Langford, West Midlands.

In the picture, he's got his back against the wall.

Having spent six months at ITEC, however, a specialist engineering company called V.G. Instruments had no qualms about giving him a try.

Chris is helping to run the production and technical data functions. And his boss says he has all the makings of a professional.



Steve Hill, Sheffield. He's the character in the doorway. Now, after a year at ITEC, Steve's working for a company called Economatics, specialising in control technology.

In layman's terms, that means developing appliances which are controlled by computer.

Like 70% of the youngsters on the ITEC scheme, Steve Hill has found more than a niche for himself in industry.

Starting from scratch, he has built the foundations of a worthwhile career.

Nevertheless, he does have other ambitions. While he's something of a microchip wizard by day, he's an embryonic rock star by night.

Maybe he should get together with Wilmot Jeremiah and his music synthesizer. Meanwhile, perhaps you should get together with the BBC Micro.

At £399, it has more capacity to become a formidable computer system than any other machine in its price bracket.

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هكذا من الأصل

East German leader's niece goes home with visa pledge

From Michael Binayon, Bonn

Frau Ingrid Berg, the niece of Herr Willi Stoph, the East German Prime Minister, has left the West German Embassy in Prague and returned with her husband, two children and mother-in-law to East Germany, a West German Government spokesman confirmed yesterday.

It is reliably understood here that the East Germans, after a week of intensive negotiations, have promised to give them visas to emigrate to the West, but have not said when the family was said to have been reluctant to leave the embassy without firm guarantees.

The arrangement was negotiated by Herr Wolfgang Vogel, the East German lawyer who is a close confidant of Herr Erich Honecker, the party leader. He has negotiated the exit of thousands of East Germans to the West.

No details of the deal have been released here, but Bonn and East Berlin were clearly interested in a swift end to the embarrassing incident with a minimum of publicity.

Bonn was particularly worried that the affair could sour the improving relations between the two German states. It came at a time when a record number of East Germans have been streaming across the border, as East Berlin has granted exit permits to applicants. Some 2,000 arrived at the emergency reception centre in Giessen in February (four times as many as in February last year) and 1,400 came in January.

If this rate continues, Bonn estimates that some 20,000 or more East Germans may come by the end of the year.

The liberalization is attributed by Bonn to the East

German wish to display a more human face in anticipation of a further request by East Berlin for more credit arrangements. The West Germans have apparently paid large sums of money to allow so many people to leave.

Because of her uncle's position, Frau Berg's action was especially difficult to handle without the East Germans losing face. But reports in several papers suggest that there are at least 14 other East Germans also in the Prague embassy.

The West German Border Protection Service recently published figures showing that last year 51 East Germans, including nine soldiers, risked their lives crossing the mined and fortified frontier with West Germany. Three were injured during their escape. There were another 30 unsuccessful attempts to cross the border.

The annual report said that East Germany was continuing to dismantle the automatic scanner guns along the border, as it promised to do last year. Some 33 miles of border were now clear, but the guns were still in place along a further 240 miles. A second wall, set back from the main border, had been raised from 6ft to 9ft to deter escapees, the number of automatic trip wires had been doubled and concrete slabs driven into the ground to prevent tunnelling.

600 detonations of automatic firing devices were registered last year, as well as 200 shots from the East German side of the border. Herr Friedrich Zimmermann, the Minister of the Interior, said the change in the "inhuman barricades" had not made this unnatural border any more penetrable.



Bullet and ballot: While troops killed 15 guerrillas in eastern El Salvador, peasant leaders of the Democratic Popular Union marched in San Salvador in support of the Christian Democrats in the March 25 poll.

Zia plans an Islamic election

From Hasan Akhtar, Islamabad

President Zia ul-Haq has given a clear indication that he would change the election system for the promised polls by March next year to make them conform to the Islamic way.

He said that his present handpicked consultative council of about 280 members, functioning in place of parliament, would continue to exist, until replaced by an elected house.

General Zia, addressing local

councillors from all over Pakistan at Sibi in Baluchistan on Wednesday, said he was launching his campaign for elections to the national and provincial assemblies from that province.

He urged the local councillors to go to the people and tell them that only the Islamic system would result in the election of God-fearing true Pakistanis to lead the people.

Though some important elements of General Zia's proposed Islamic elections are undefined, he said he would

Turkey ends martial law in 13 provinces

The Turkish Cabinet decided yesterday to lift martial law in 13 of the country's 67 provinces for the first time in five years, but extended it for at least four months in the rest (our correspondent in Ankara writes).

In eight of the 13 provinces, however, a state of emergency will remain in force under which governors enjoy sweeping powers and are empowered to ban strikes and curb unions

Commission wants £8,300m more to keep EEC solvent

From Ian Murray, Brussels

The European Commission has named its price for keeping the EEC solvent and vital up to the turn of the millennium. In a paper circulated to member states yesterday it asks for its spending ceiling to be raised by about £8,300m a year at present rates.

The proposal will be put to the European summit in three weeks' time, along with ideas for reforming the common agricultural policy and reducing the size of Britain's share of Community financing.

It is not the Commission's intention that all this extra money should be spent at once. But it insists that the legal ceiling must be raised substantially if the Community is not to be locked into a perpetual argument over its cash crisis.

Not until 1986 at the earliest could any extra money be made available, even if the summit were to approve it. This is because any increase would need to be ratified by all national parliaments, a long process taking well over a year.

The Commission estimates that by 1986, if Spain and Portugal are admitted to the Community, spending will immediately have to rise substantially above the present ceiling. Even with the kind of strict budgetary discipline Britain is demanding, there would be no money available for funding any new policies, and scarcely enough to pay for the old ones.

The present ceiling means that the Community can have no more than about £15,316m this year and it is already committed to spend all but £26m.

Of this total about 7,000m is raised by payment of a proportion of value-added tax receipts, and it is this proportion which is subject to the "ceiling".

Because VAT is charged on different items and at different rates throughout the Community, a hypothetical rate based on a common basket of goods and services has been set and used to calculate a hypothetical VAT revenue total.

At the moment the member states have agreed to hand over up to 1 per cent of this total to the Community. The Commission wants to double that percentage, and so make up to twice as much money available from VAT.

Both West German members of the commission objected to the proposed increase, which was strongly supported by Mr Christopher Tugendhat, the British Budget commissioner.

It is already clear that both countries will need a lot of convincing before agreeing such an increase. Britain, in particular, will never allow any rise unless it is totally satisfied that it is being asked to pay no more than a fair share towards the budget.

Soviet number two role for Gorbachev

Moscow (NYT) - Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the youngest member of the Politburo and the one considered closest to Mr Andropov before the Soviet leader's death, seemed to affirm his standing as number two on the ruling council on Wednesday, when he addressed voters only two days before Mr Chernenko.

Speaking in Itapovo in the northern Caucasus, Mr Gorbachev focused strongly on economic issues, listing many of the experiments and programmes that were begun under Mr Andropov in efforts to revise the Soviet economy.

The emphasis suggested to Western diplomats that Mr Gorbachev, who originally joined the Politburo as an expert on agriculture, had been given broad responsibility for the economy, perhaps to pursue the changes initiated by Mr Andropov.

Mr Gorbachev passed only lightly over foreign affairs in his speech, which was published in *Izvestia*. He seemed to strike a somewhat less strident tone on referring to the United States than either Mr Andrei Gromyko, the Foreign Minister or Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, the Defence Minister. He declared that Moscow was ready "to use any real chance for fair negotiations, for reaching practical accords".

There had been several earlier signals that Mr Gorbachev, who is 52, had assumed a strong position in the Politburo after Mr Chernenko was named party leader. He had made the closing comments at the Central Committee session that selected Mr Chernenko, and he stood to the right of the new leader after his appointment.

Western diplomats said the timing of his address to voters seemed to be the strongest evidence so far of his standing in the leadership. In the weeks preceding Sunday's unopposed elections to the Supreme Soviet, Politburo members each made a speech to the district from which they are formally nominated.

The speeches generally came in ascending order of importance, and the last two are reserved for the premier, Mr Nikolai Tikhonov, and the party chief, Mr Chernenko.



Mr Gorbachev: Key speech on economic policy.

who is scheduled to speak today.

By speaking just before Mr Tikhonov, and after such senior members as Mr Gromyko and Marshal Ustinov, Mr Gorbachev seemed to underline his position.

Diplomats said it remained unclear whether Mr Chernenko had advanced Mr Gorbachev, or whether his promotion was a bargain struck between Mr Chernenko and those Politburo members who preferred a younger leader and wanted assurances that the changes Mr Andropov had set in motion would not be abandoned.

In his speech, Mr Gorbachev listed many of the priorities Mr Andropov had set when he first came to power in November, 1982, such as modernizing industrial technology, improving management, bolstering labour discipline, fighting corruption and increasing industrial production.

Mr Gorbachev was generally regarded as the Politburo member responsible for carrying on many of Mr Andropov's projects as the leader's health deteriorated. He had also played an important role in efforts to bring new blood into regional party machines and in cracking down on corruption.

In his speech Mr Gorbachev spoke of "further enforcing order, increasing exactness, organization and discipline and waging uncompromising struggle with the negative phenomena that contradict our morals and socialist legality".

Mr Gorbachev's treatment of foreign affairs was too brief to give diplomats much grist for analysis.

Senate defeat for Reagan in nuclear exports vote

From Mohsin Ali, Washington

The Senate, ignoring Reagan Administration pleas for more leeway, has voted to ban exports of nuclear equipment or technology to nations which do not have nuclear weapons and have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The amendment to a Bill revising export controls was approved by voice vote on Tuesday. It was supported by a coalition of conservatives and liberals who fear diversion of equipment to nuclear weapons.

The prohibition would affect countries such as Argentina, Brazil, India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and South Africa, a congressional aide said.

His critics argued that the ban

would not work, since prohibited countries could get nuclear technology and equipment elsewhere.

The Senate had earlier defeated, by 55 to 38 votes, an alternative offered by the Administration. This would have allowed more discretion in US nuclear exports for peaceful purposes.

The Administration argued that the US must participate in nuclear trade to be able to influence it. Its proposal would have encouraged nations to abide by standards of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency.

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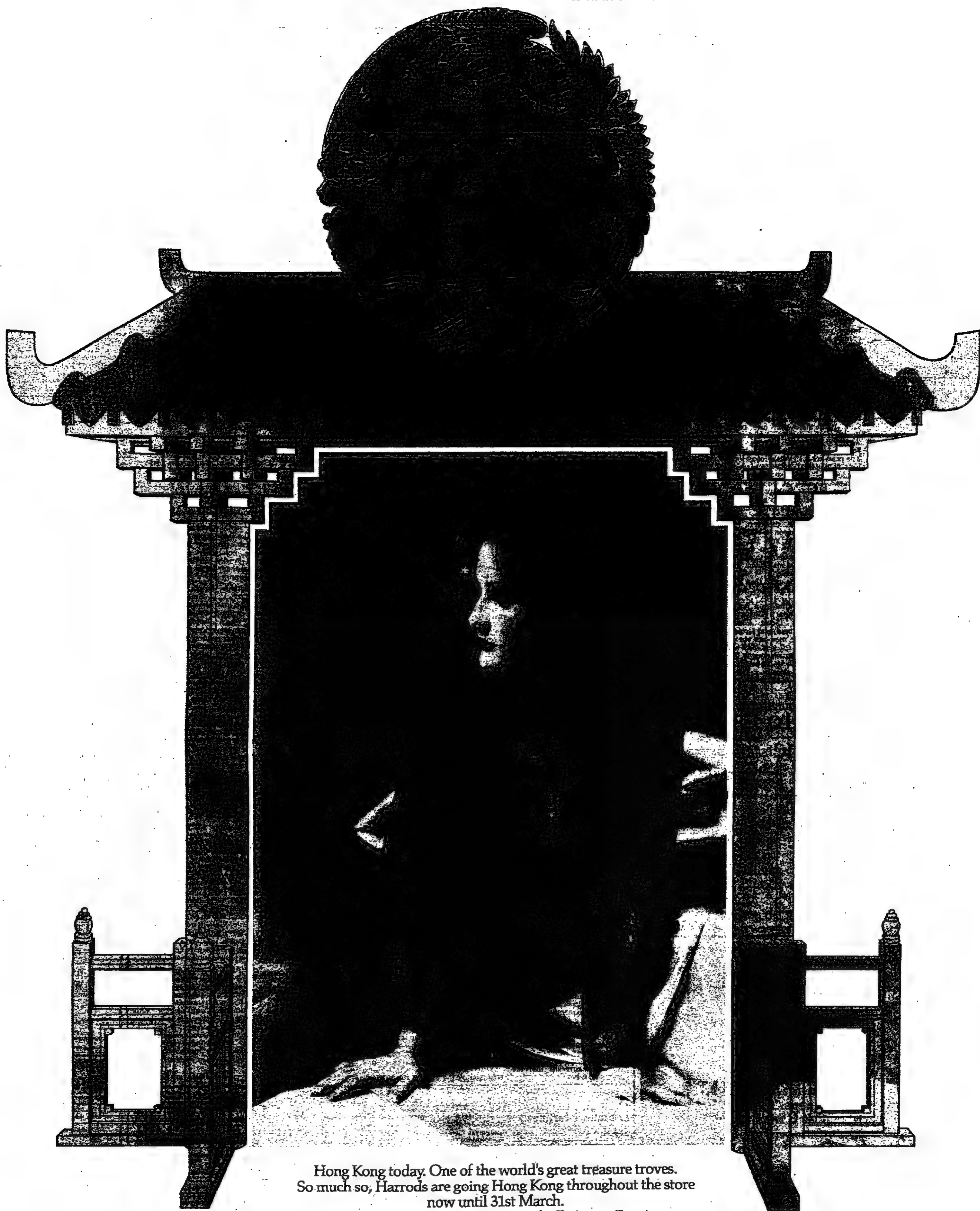
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"Capt. Stephens, there's something for you at left luggage."

You might reasonably argue that bomb disposal is just about the worst job in the world. And that any man who volunteers for such a precarious activity seriously needs his head examined.

Mark Stephens* would disagree.

He volunteered in 1969, shortly after joining the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

(He could have chosen a specialisation like Management Sciences or Automatic Data Processing, but instead he chose bomb disposal.)

He hasn't lost a wink of sleep over his decision since.

"Basically, I think people over-estimate the dangers of the job," Stephens calmly explains.

"They have a picture in their minds of some poor soul snipping at wires while a bomb ticks away beneath him. In reality, that kind of situation is very rare.

These days, we usually neutralise a bomb with the aid of advanced technology. And from a safe distance, I assure you."

To master this technology, Stephens spent a year attending the Ammunition Technical Officers course.

For the first six months he studied at the Royal Military College of Science - maths, physics, chemistry, electronics and fuel technology.

All to first year University standard.

Then, on to the Army School of Ammunition to learn the practicalities of handling explosives.

Not just bombs and incendiary devices, but also ammunition, mines and guided missiles.

He studied their composition and the means to make them safe.

He also studied the means to blow them up (in the case of bombs) with devices like the 'wheelbarrow', pictured below.

As a fully-fledged Ammunition Technical Officer, Stephens took charge of an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team covering the West of England.

Needless to say, much of his two year posting was taken up with cases of mistaken identity.

"I've spent quite a few hours in railway stations and left luggage offices, often in the middle of the night," Stephens recalls.

"Most of the incidents were false alarms, but you always have to assume they're real.

I've even sent in the 'wheelbarrow' to dispose of a bag of apples before now."

During this time, he also had to deal with a number of 'live' bombs.

An interesting case occurred when he was called to an oil refinery in South Wales. An incendiary device had been discovered in a hut used as a flammable chemicals store.

"Unfortunately, the hut was right next to the

main pipeline, so there was a good chance of the whole refinery going up.

The first priority was to attach a hook and line to the device and drag it out of the immediate danger area.

We accomplished that pretty quickly but then had a tense wait in case a delayed action mechanism had been triggered.

It hadn't, so we neutralised it with a controlled explosion. Standard procedure was then to search the area for other bombs.

We eventually found a suitcase hidden in a large dustbin. After much yanking and pulling with the hook and line we got it open and examined the contents through a telescope.

Panic over.

It was full of fancy dress clothing."

Equipping the Army.

Although Mark Stephens volunteered for bomb disposal in 1969, he didn't attend the Ammunition Technical Officers course until 1975.

During the intervening years he gained a thorough grounding in the workings of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

In short, the main job of an Officer in the RAOC is to supply the needs of every soldier in the Army.

From the vehicle he drives and the food he eats, right down to the boots he wears.

Stephens' first posting in this capacity was to Cyprus, as part of the United Nations peace-keeping force.

"I fell right in at the deep end," he says.

"I'd spent seven months learning how to keep a British soldier happy, only to find myself also catering for the needs of the other six armies in the UN force.

I had to provide them with things like coal and wood for saunas.

I even had to organise the baking of twenty different types of bread."

After six months, Stephens was posted back to the UK where he was asked to head a climbing expedition in the Alps.

He set off for the Matterhorn, but on arrival found the weather unreliable.

During a particularly bad spell he settled down in a local bar to await an improvement.

"The television was on and the first thing we saw was pictures of Turkish troops parachuting into Cyprus.

Ten days later I was back in my old job, wearing a United Nations uniform.

It was business as usual, apart from a few shell holes here and there."

Preparing for war.

In 1978, after finishing his two year tour of duty in bomb disposal, Mark Stephens was posted to Germany.

He joined a team whose job it was to review contingency plans for the re-supplying of British troops in the event of war.

This entailed planning a continuous flow of ammunition, fresh food, fuel and clothing for the 50,000 soldiers of the British Corps. Plus the 40,000 Territorials that would quickly arrive.

Their plan covered supply lines that ran back to Belgium and the UK.

And involved the co-ordinated efforts of the RAOC, the Royal Corps of Transport and the front line troops.

"At the outset, the logistical problems were mind-boggling," Stephens records.

"Yet the solutions you are expected to produce have to be very simple.

We work on the premise that, in war time, what can go wrong will go wrong. So we avoid complications at all costs."

The task completed, Mark Stephens returned to his role as an Ammunition Technical Officer.

He was based in Germany, and his focus of interest was not bomb disposal but missiles and ammunition.

He was in charge of technical matters concerning eight ammunition depots which housed, among other things, the Lance missile.

He had to ensure safe storage of the missile's propellant, its guidance systems and control mechanisms.

"That's what makes a career in the RAOC so fulfilling," says Stephens.

"The Corps is continually being compared to a High Street chain store, coping with the problems of supplying everything from lamb chops to lamp shades. And to a certain extent that analogy is true.

But when you add items like missiles and unexploded bombs, the picture becomes rather different.

I don't feel a career in civilian life could ever have offered me such variety."

If you would like to know more about life as an Army Officer, please write to: Major John Floyd,

Army Officer Entry, Dept. B2, Empress State Building, Lillie Road, London SW6 1TR.

Tell him your date of birth, your school or university and the qualifications you have or expect.



Army Officer

SPECTRUM

Punch-drunk fighter running out of time

The Times Profile: City of Liverpool

When you arrive in Liverpool and walk those evacuated streets, moving from one blotch of urban destitution into another, or drive from barren housing estates about to be abandoned, pathetically clustered around extinguished factories, to docks which stretch aimlessly and empty for miles, you cannot believe that this is a city with the energy to hurt Mrs Thatcher. You feel it may well haunt her, but it is unlikely to hurt her.

It is more likely to hurt itself. It is a city without resources - about to become the front line in the battle against the Government's spending cuts. In almost every way you can think of, it is defenceless. Liverpool today has no industrial base, nor has it raw materials; it has little skilled labour - the craftsmen have moved out; its docks have been undermined by the container trade. Partly because it is on the wrong side of England, neither bribes, nor cajoling, nor Indian trading by successive governments could persuade national or international companies to save it from their rationalization plans. Unlike

Liverpudlians may have been fatally undermined by generations of casual employment. Fathers and grandfathers were well accustomed to a three or four day week, so psychologically their sons were more able than a southerner to cope with even more shrinkage. They are not rancorous, not restless people; they might be rowdy in pubs at closing time, but perhaps to their own disadvantage they are not really warriors.

Alan Bleasdale, author of *Boys from the Blackstuff*, described the Liverpool character: "When you come into a room there is that initial aggression to get your opinion across. You have to be aggressive to make yourself heard, everyone talks so much. There is a definite strut until you make your point; then you say, well, that's OK then, I've been noticed. You give up, let the argument all dribble away, and spend the rest of the night having a drink and enjoying yourself." For this there are plenty of handsome pubs, and triple-decker drinking clubs open until 2 am. Disco for kids, cabaret with Scouse comedians, or in some places dancing for the elderly - "grab a granny joint".

Like many people who live from day to day, Liverpoolians have the knack of easy human contact, but little taste for the disciplines and rigours which forge the impersonal skills which achieve material comfort.

Indeed, what is eerie about this city in its death throes is the absence - in its streets and its people - of a sense of threat; the absence even of a tangible sense of tension. You would detect more menace in the glance of a New York subway cop than you would in the faces of these candid and amiable people if you strolled through Liverpool for an entire night. Alcoholic squabbling seems to be an entirely private affair.

Such social serenity is bizarre. It can only be the result of lethargy or a kind of incurable innocence which cannot tell the difference between profound urban decay and seasonal crisis. While the official unemployment figure for "travel to work in the Liverpool area" is around 22 per cent, in 1981 the Merseyside Census Digest, breaking down the figures by electoral ward, gave a clearer picture of the reality. For areas like Abercromby, Everton, Vauxhall, the figure, three years ago, was between 47 per cent and 51 per cent. There have been closures since, and there are closures to come. In contrast, the figure for the professional, middle-class area of Grassendale was 14.3 per cent.

Another of Liverpool's problems is that unlike the great days of Boss politicians - Seaton, Braddock (who were indeed a mixed blessing) - Liverpool has now no outstanding political personalities capable of keeping the city's needs in the limelight. When there are marches against factory closures, they appear to be led by the Cloth, represented by Archbishop Derek Worlock and Bishop David Sheppard. Although these men are known to be committed and genuine in their concern, there is a



Derek Hatton in full cry: "Liverpool will be a more powerful force than Margaret Thatcher and all her Government"

suggestion of reliance on old paternalistic institutions.

The present crisis might have thrown up a whirling dervish in the person of deputy council leader, Derek Hatton. Although he has easily eclipsed his leader, John Hamilton, on closer observation he does not display many of the attributes of a canny politician. He appears to have little patience for long-term, coherent strategies. He told me that when he was an amateur boxer going into the first round, he never saw the necessity for having a strategy for round two.

A trim man with a driving restless manner, he spoke of certain victory in a hoarse voice. ("My voice is destroyed with shouting at Jenkin", he said.) He declared: "When Liverpool as a city starts to move, quite honestly it will be a more powerful force than Margaret Thatcher and all her Government."

In a phantom city of essentially gentle people, this seemed a highly unlikely development. Hatton has almost certainly misread the willingness of the working class of Liverpool to take to the streets on a byzantine manoeuvre involving long-term high finance. A warning that submission to the Tory Government could mean a 70 per cent increase in rates has little meaning for them, since few of them pay rates; many have to be assisted to pay rent.

Derek Hatton is untypical of Liverpoolians in his taste for the theoretical, the obstinate rigidity of his thinking and the harshness of some of his attitudes. Liverpoolians, whose first principle is to be loyal to mates, did not at all appreciate his warning that those who did not support the strategy would become "lepers".

In addition, contrary to popular belief trade union solidarity is not that tight. Having no work place means little exposure to indoctrination.

There is also almost total incomprehension on every level - among

university and polytechnic students I spoke to, professional people, men in pubs - as to just what bankruptcy would mean. Those who were willing to wrestle with its complexities (the majority treated it as none of their affair) were sceptical that politicians, Conservative or Labour, who have been unable to stop Liverpool rotting for decades would be galvanized into remedial action by a technical bankruptcy which opens a Pandora's box of untested possibilities.

Who would run the city? Commissioners - accountants, in other words. Would they have the necessary expertise or win essential cooperation? It was one thing for a commissioner to take over a single department, like housing in Clay Cross, administering relatively simple plans already worked out. But no commissioner has ever run a city. Would Barclay's continue to provide massive short-term loans? Would banks throughout the country

What can be expected from them is persistent and pointless destruction.

A survey of the Vauxhall area, an area of multiple deprivation, revealed that, unlike the children of the "established" working class who are encouraged by their parents to see career prospects in education and to believe that school has some relevance, the Vauxhall children had no such illusions. These children recognize that school was marginal to their lives.

One consequence is that juvenile crime is high. A quarter of all prosecutions by the Merseyside police involved children under 16, and another quarter youths between 16 and 21. But this does not correspond fully to the reality, since a great number of offenders are never caught. Vandalism in Liverpool is not just a question of smashing windows. It has been described as "the systematic destruction of housing and social facilities" by youngsters who do not see it as a crime, but simply a way of passing the time.

On another level, the city is pinning its hopes on items such as Liverpool being named a free port, on the construction of a maritime museum, but above all on the International Garden Festival, which will run from May to October. The supposition here is that if you plant exotic flowers in superabundance in the graveyard docks, horticulturalists lusting after blossoms will converge on the city from all over the world and be so irresistibly taken by the wan charm of disabled Merseyside that they will create a permanent tourist boom.

The locals are not impressed by such herbaceous remedies. A citizen gave me his reaction: "One of those horticulturalists was here the other night; I'll never forget what he said for the rest of my life; he said: 'For me, the daisy is the Action Man of the flowering world.' The daisy!"

A look of consternation came over his face at the realization of the kind of

person the city was attempting to attract. "If the festival was in my own back garden," he added "I'd draw the curtains."

Richard Kemp, the Liberal spokesman on economic development, also attempted to indicate for me where Liverpool's salvation might lie. In the Garden Festival certainly, but also in some great yearning he was convinced exists in the hearts of people out there for craft work from Liverpool. His admiration for these plucky craftsmen was too powerful for him to identify just what they might be producing, but eventually he said he did know a man who was producing three-piece suits at £1,000 a time.

Finally he had to admit that Liverpool's great contribution might

Sacrifice may be its contribution

be sacrificial; being at the front end of the devastation that the new microchip world will wreak on the old industrial cities. People could learn from Liverpool's fate. But then again they might not.

Professor Fred Ridley, head of the Department of Political Theory and Institutions at the University of Liverpool, had this to say: "The problem with Liverpool is that any kind of political analysis upsets people. It is seen as doing a disservice to the city, frightening away investors. There is a lot of emphasis on developments such as the reclamation of the docks for the Maritime Museum, the Garden Festival. This and aid to small businesses could not hope to mop up unemployment. Even if the whole economy of Britain was to revive, it would not help Liverpool. There would have to be a boom. The only way we would get a spin-off is if there



Council leader John Hamilton

was an excess productive growth somewhere else which could not be contained within London or Birmingham and had to come here. This is highly unlikely.

"The trouble is nobody can think of anything which it would be natural for Liverpool to provide. It seems to me to be extremely silly to insist on being optimistic. What the city should be doing is screaming for help."

Peter Lennon



The people are not warriors

Manchester, which has outwitted it on almost every level - the skilled builders on Liverpool's housing projects often come from Manchester - it never managed to set up a nucleus of small businesses to feed off the larger ones, or partly to replace them when recession came.

Its posture, fatally, has been too often that of being in service, as well-heeled retainer or casual and dependent helper. It was in service to the slave trade; assisted the passage of peasant and gent to the New World, facilitated the expansion of the Lancashire cotton trade. Then it stood by to service the car industry; biscuits, Meccano toys, all under pressure from modern industrial strategies and all have slid or are sliding from its grasp. Nothing would cling permanently, not even Tate and Lyle golden syrup.

Once a great mercantile city, Liverpool appears to have lost its entrepreneurial skills. So oppressive is the sense of terminal decay that you cannot believe that the great, handsome buildings of the old days, like the Royal Liver building adjoining desolation, are part of the legacy of the people of Liverpool today. They are more like luggage left temporarily behind by opulent giants of another race and no doubt bound to be collected and taken away.

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moreover... Miles Kingdon

Ireland, behind closed doors

Last Sunday morning I was standing at the end of the Giant's Causeway, on the topmost tip of Northern Ireland, watching the waves foam and crash over the blackened rocks, which was curious because the sea itself was dead calm. There was a little old man bent over the rocks, putting something into a white carrier bag, like a character in a nineteenth century print.

"Seaweed," he said, in response to my curiosity. "Brown seaweed, very good for cooking. It only grows two months of the year, in winter, so you have to know where and when to look for it."

He told me how to cook it. He told me how to recognize it. He told me that he had been born actually on the Causeway, in a house that was no longer there, and about the other six houses that were no longer there because they had been swept away, not by a storm, but by the National Trust, which had replaced them in safety on top of the cliff, and he would still be talking to this day if we hadn't had to move on to lunch near Ballycastle.

The people we were having lunch with were a pair we had met and taken to at a Belfast party last November. And a terrific lunch it was too, though the roast lamb seemed gamier than usual. "That's because it's not lamb", said Patrick. "It's young goat, only we don't tell people that until after they've had a first helping, just in case they're prejudiced."

Well, everyone's prejudiced about Northern Ireland, and one of the things you have to put up with if you live there is English people coming over and expecting the place to be like Beirut. It's nothing of the sort. Perhaps I'm just lucky, but when I think back to Northern

Ireland, it's things like the old man on the Causeway, or roast goat at Ballycastle, that float into the mind. When we arrived at the Harbour Bar, five o'clock on Saturday, it was jam-packed, but by 6.30 it was nearly empty. "It's the pattern," said the barman. "It fills up during the afternoon, then ebbs away. They'll all be back in an hour or so, ready for the evening. The place is open from 11.30 in the morning till 11 at night, when the doors close. All that closing and opening you get in England - it's an awful waste of time."

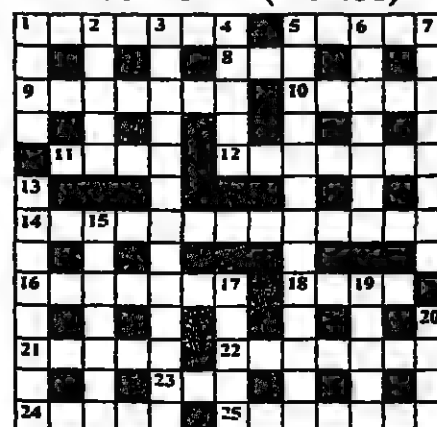
That's the kind of dry logic which is at the heart of real Irish jokes, not the crude ersatz Irish jokes we've been fed in recent

years. The Harbour Bar itself is nothing much to look at - it's the cosy ambience which makes the place, the roar of talking and crackling laughter from the little rooms down the passage. Northern Ireland is maybe like the Harbour Bar on a big scale - not very much to look at, but well worth getting inside. It's different there. For instance, did you notice that the barman said "... till eleven at night, when the doors close"? In England he would have said: "... till eleven at night, when everybody goes home". I think I'll pour myself another pint of stout and tell you more about the place on Monday.

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 281)

ACROSS
1 Round of applause (7)
5 Zest (5)
8 Whatever (3)
9 Timber's cutters (3,4)
10 Approaches (5)
11 Valley (4)
12 Particular (7)
14 Body twister (13)
16 Removes camouflage (7)
18 Sworn promise (4)
21 Gangway (5)
22 Copy (7)
23 Drink delicately (3)
24 Facilitates (5)
25 Farthest degree (7)

DOWN
1 Affectedly proper (4)
2 Scene of interest (5)
3 Manual skill (13)
4 Duties (5)
5 Women's doctor (13)



6 E African language (7)
7 Out of use (8)
13 Meticalous (8)
15 Goddess of vengeance (7)
17 Hit hard (5)
19 Vestige (5)
20 In this place (4)

SOLUTION TO No 280

ACROSS: 1 Runar 5 Advice 8 End 9 Summit 10 Letter 11 Stud 12 Hibernia 14 Apple pie order 17 Arborea 19 Each 21 Pester 23 I Ching 24 Too 25 Stench 26 Newton
DOWN: 2 Erupt 3 Armadillo 4 Ketchup 5 Ad lib 6 Vet 7 Crevice 13 Rance show 15 Pervent 16 Evasion 18 Earth 20 Canto 22 Ton

Tomorrow

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THAT INFORMS,
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- Travel: Islands in the Med - Sardinia, Corsica and Malta and the fare deals
- The low rollers: State of play in the betting shops and bingo halls
- Sir Anthony Parsons: Reflections on the Iranian revolution
- Rugby preview: Can Scotland capture the Triple Crown?

PLUS: News from home and abroad; Family Money on the future of gift funds; review of the month's rock and jazz records; Values tries on cut-price spectacles; Family Life; Drink; Prize concise crossword; Bridge and Chess

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FRIDAY PAGE

COMMENT

A subtle approach

A lot of women seem to feel that the process of sexual revolution has ground to a halt of late. It is certainly the case that when jobs are squeezed at all, women are hardest squeezed and, as like as not, squeezed right out. There is also the disappointment that a movement which started out with a considerable roar now seems only to whimper. But that would be to ignore the subtlety of the changes that are still going on. The old system may be only just clinging to its familiar and reassuring props.

Take, for example, the matter of top jobs. Most big organizations have now opened one or two turnstiles for women to enter the charmed circle. These organizations have, in fact, competed with one another to do just that. It is also clear that most of the women allowed through are there to demonstrate all the most desirable male traits. This, in the longer term, will justify the holding at bay of that veritable army of really dangerous women waiting in the wings of power - the women who can deploy *female* skills.

The men are not doing it consciously. Most of them are somewhat older. They are basically nice, with courtly manners, but they are absolutely hopeless in the face of a really determined and shameless woman - something for which their life has not prepared them.

Many members of the next generation (of men) are made of sterner stuff. They are less pleasant on the whole, but they are not so frightened either of bossy older women or sexy younger ones. They also know some of them, that talent is in desperately short supply and you simply cannot afford to waste any of it.

Scarcity of talent is affecting women in other ways, too. It has dawned on them that the great majority of men are violent and almost purely without subtlety or sensitivity.

Women who have postponed marriage, if need be indefinitely, are noticing that a great many of the best men are husbands and therefore off-limits.

Complicated matters further, the new independent women are behaving rather like men always have: they are prepared to take their chances and will not tie themselves down irrevocably in the meantime.

It is a confusing scene for the feminists. Are the new women plotters or leaders? The heresy of the few women is to admit that not all men are awful and to behave like men in the ensuing and inevitable fight. Perhaps the new women really are leaders of men and will emerge fairly soon in the commanding heights of society. Let us hope so. To do so, they are going to have to purge a few sisters along the way and seek out clever, resourceful and sympathetic allies among the men.

Alistair Mant

Safer flakes



If you are one of the five million people in Britain with a sensitive skin, you will know that some washing powders are untouchable. Wash your clothes in a product containing enzymes or bleach and your skin becomes itchy and red.

The National Eczema Society has been inundated with queries about unexplained rashes, and complaints of bad bouts of eczema, after the introduction of a new Persil product. The "new system" Persil contains enzymes and bleach, though this is not stated on the box, and this has prompted the society to compile a list of products without irritants.

Beneficial bruises



Pictures of battered children often have one common feature - the victims have wide-eyed, terrified expressions. So when obviously happy children, hearing signs of their parents' quarrel, turn up in doctors' surgeries, as they have in the past couple of years, it can be

Top of the list are pure soapflakes, though they are not, of course, suitable for... automatics. International Stores, Safeways, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose all produce their own brand under the description of low lather powders.

If the low lather products do not do the trick, try one of these: ● Cool Force - a low temperature liquid from Tesco and large branches of Boots or Woolworth's. ● Fillett, a Swiss washing powder, sold in Safeways and a few branches of Sainsbury's and the Bishop's.

● Amway products, available through selected agents. Details: Milton Keynes. Tel: (0908) 614444. Satisfied customers should write to the National Eczema Society, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1. (Tel: 388 4097).

confusing. The patients are offspring of Vietnamese refugees, and, far from having violent parents, these children have been tenderly treated for coughs and colds by the traditional method of "t-sha".

This involves first rubbing the skin with an aromatic substance and then pinching and pulling the skin until it is bruised. Western doctors have been misled by marks left by the massage which, looks as though the child had been beaten with a stick or belt.

MEDICAL BRIEFING

The breath factor



Squash players are especially vulnerable to heart attacks.

With alarming frequency, sportsmen are dropping dead as they play. Those who enjoy especially stressful games - squash for example - seem to be particularly vulnerable to unexpected heart attacks.

It has been suggested that strenuous exercise puts too much strain on the heart if a player has not trained properly, or when, unknowingly, he already has underlying heart disease. But a recent report on 30 squash players who died this way has prompted Dr Alan Fowler of Bridgend Hospital, Glamorgan, Wales, to offer a further explanation. It could be, he says, that in a strenuous and competitive sport such as squash the players simply do not breathe properly.

During energetic exercise, Dr Fowler explains, the body releases adrenaline which stimulates the heart to work harder at pumping blood and oxygen around the body. But in order to do this the heart needs extra oxygen. If a sportsman does not take care to breathe deeply, the heart may become starved of oxygen and this could cause a heart attack.

Leprosy vaccine



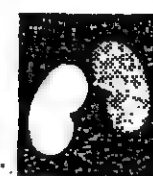
Leprosy has always had a bad press, from biblical times to the present day, and the latest misconception about the disease came during Princess Anne's recent trip to Africa. Some reports suggested that she ran a high risk of catching the disease when she visited a leper colony. In fact, leprosy, a bacterial infection which attacks the skin and nerves, is more difficult to contract than tuberculosis, which is caused by related bacteria. Lepers have been ostracized for centuries, largely because of the

ghastly limb deformities it causes as a result of the nervous involvement, rather than because it is a highly contagious. Holding the limb of a leper is quite safe.

Dr Gerald Ree, senior lecturer at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who spent a long time in Africa, suspects that he has had low grade leprosy infection.

If leprosy is diagnosed early enough, it can be treated successfully with drugs. Unfortunately, there is now widespread resistance to one of them, dapsone, and the other, rifampicin, is expensive. According to Dr Ree, the hope for the Third World lies in a vaccine which is being developed in Britain and the United States.

Transplant trade



Doctors estimate that only 10 per cent of potentially usable organs are made available for transplant operations in the United States. But Dr Barry H. Jacobs, a surgeon from Virginia, got short shrift from both the medical profession and the public alike when he recently suggested that healthy individuals could sell one of their

kidneys, and he would set up a clinic to buy and market them. Recipients could be sure of obtaining a "perfect match" of their own kidneys and donors would obtain a "free market" price.

There is nothing at present in United States law to prevent Dr Jacobs from setting up such a clinic. But US transplant physicians have condemned the idea as "morally offensive and ethically indefensible".

Olivia Timbs and Lorraine Fraser

John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands keep married strife for the film screen. Marcel Berlins reports

Harmony behind the scenes

John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands are a disconcerting couple to meet. Cassavetes writes, makes and acts in films about loneliness, desperation, the disintegration of relationships and the fragility of love. His wife is in most of them, playing roles in which depression, self-destructiveness, hysteria and the inability to cope are the most frequent ingredients.

In London for their latest film *Love Streams*, which won the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival this week, and which opens on March 9, they turn out to be a friendly, jokey, affectionate couple with not a sign of torment or anguish between them. These purveyors of marriage breakdown on screen have been together 23 years, and have three children with whom, moreover, they claim to be on the most excellent terms. *Love Streams* is probably

Cassavetes's most polished and assured film, with none of the improvised dialogue and wayward camera work that marked his early films and gave him his reputation as a difficult and controversial director.

On the surface, it is a simple story of a divorced woman, rejected by her teenage daughter, going to stay with her brother, a successful but empty and loveless writer. As with all Cassavetes's films, the storyline reveals little about the true power of the film, which lies in the convincing and moving portrayal of the complex emotions aroused when relationships go wrong.

It is the first time they have played leading parts opposite each other, though Cassavetes has directed Gena Rowlands in most of her starring roles, including *A Woman Under the Influence* and *Opening Night* and she played minor parts in several



Rowlands and Cassavetes: playing lead roles in the story of a crumbling relationship.

other of his films.

She said: "We've adjusted to each other. I think I've learned to treat him just like another director, not 100 per cent but most of the time. I also think he's got nicer over the years - to all actors, not just to me. But at the beginning it was difficult. You have this loving, protective husband and he turns into a demanding dictator."

The first time, in *Faces* (1968), I can honestly say it was more my fault. He didn't act all that much different from other directors. I just expected him to be different. When he said things that I would easily have accepted

from other directors, I thought he was just picking on me. But as he's directed me more, I've learned to adjust."

Cassavetes, 55, is somewhat at a loss to explain why he makes the kind of films he does. "I would have liked to have made more commercial films, closely knit, not confusing, where there is an answer for everything and it's all greatly entertaining. But I started to make films, and none of that came out. Instead, this expression of dissatisfaction kept emerging."

Sometimes, he admits, even after finishing a film he remains uncertain about the relationships

between his characters. "I still don't know what the brother and sister really feel about each other."

"My characters are not violent or vile. They're everyday people. They have some money, but find themselves discontented with their own loneliness, their own mortality, the sameness of life."

Rowlands is an intensely emotional actress, marvellous at portraying suffering and vulnerability. Her own life, she says, has been largely free from the hurt and despair she usually portrays. Yet she has invaded that mental territory so realistically that people constantly approach

her with their confidences. There is no improvisation in her performance. She dislikes changing even a single word of the script. "Perhaps it's a reaction against my early training as an actress, when we were told to feel free to change the language. Today, I accept the discipline of the dialogue. It's a challenge to me to make the words sound natural, even if they appear to be unnatural."

Where did she get the understanding of the types she portrays? "I'm Welsh", she laughs. She was indeed brought up in a Welsh village in Wisconsin. Her father and grandfather both spoke the language and kept to the customs. Cassavetes was the son of a Greek businessman.

Cassavetes sees *Love Streams* as the film representing the confluence of many of the themes and ideas that have preoccupied him since his directorial debut *Shadows* in 1961. It is, he feels, the end of a particular road. What next? "I would be difficult for me to make a comedy. I think I could take anything and make it unfunny", he says, doing himself less than justice. His films, for all their intensity and seriousness of subject, do not lack humour.

Nor has Rowlands any desire to play the clown. "I'm drawn to dramatic roles. I like their complications. I feel happy when I am working them out". But a romantic film is definitely on the cards. They are busy planning it. It will star Rowlands, but not necessarily her husband. The thought of a Cassavetes *Love Story* is almost beyond imagination. His fans will believe it when they see it.

Caroline Moorehead talks to prodigious novelist Storm Jameson

'Just killing time until death'

It is truly hard to be as old as Storm Jameson, the much praised novelist of the 1930s and 1940s, whose delightful autobiography, *Journey from the North*, has just been republished by Virago. At 93, upright, elegant, but as frail and leathery as the pale gauze scarf she wears about her neck, she knows that she wants to die. "I have lived much, much too long. I don't like being old. I don't like making an effort. I would far rather be dead, just vanish away. After my second husband died I was sure I was going to die in five minutes. And, damn it, I'm still here."

There is nothing mawkish or self-pitying in her manner. If her eyes and the lines on her face sometimes contain an expression of almost unbearable sadness, she is also quick to laugh, to underline everything she says with humour, however bleak. "You see, I'm much too much of a coward to kill myself. I admire Arthur Koestler enormously. But I feel I would certainly make a mess of it. I'm clumsy, like most Yorkshire women."

"I was revolted by the change"

The Yorkshire of her ancestors and her childhood is important to her. The daughter of a merchant sea captain and an uncompromising but loving mother, perhaps the dominant influence on her life, she grew up in Whitby. "I carry North Yorkshire around with me, the unkindness of the people, their severity but also their honesty. Two years ago, her grandson took her back on a visit. They stayed three days. "I was revolted by the change. My



Storm Jameson at the height of her success, and today

Whitby was gone. Built over. Destroyed."

Yet she wonders now whether she should not "have run for my life, to the North". The view from her modern flat, on the outskirts of Cambridge, filled with ever multiplying identical semi-detached red brick houses, depresses her. It's all very different from the landscape she remembers, and loves, with its "bare, hard lines."

It was her mother who made certain that she sat for a county scholarship in Scarborough which led to a first-class degree at Leeds University and later to research at University College, London. But it was her mother, too, who applied the brakes to what might have been a smoother literary journey when she saw to it that her daughter refused the job Harriet Shaw Weaver offered her on the prestige literary magazine *The*



Egoist in 1914. (It went instead to Rebecca West).

As it was, Storm Jameson married, a first match which brought her a son but little happiness and a good deal of worry about money. So she became a copywriter for an advertising agency (a miserable experience, vividly conjured up in *Company Parade*) and later the London scout for the American publisher Alfred Knopf. Full of energy, forceful, if only on the surface, it was never possible for her to be anything but direct. She records wryly that a friend once told her she had "the tongue of a rattlesnake."

Meanwhile she wrote a prodigious number of novels. "Too many," wrote much, much too much. I needed the money because I spent it all as soon as I got it." Of more than 50 novels that appeared, she remembers only five or six with any satisfaction, even if Howard Spring once called her "the most important woman novelist in England." "I must say, though that I worked tremendously hard at it. Was it worth it? I don't know."

In 1938 Storm Jameson became president of the British PEN, the international writers' association, and for the war years worked uninterruptedly and with a sort of fevered energy at getting refugees out of Nazi Germany. Like the writing, she views the clutter and confusion of those years with little satisfaction. "There was too much of everything. I did too much. I made too many mistakes, of practically every sort. I'm clumsy, mostly in the things I say."

In her autobiography she describes herself endearingly as someone with "the air of confidence and strength of mind, behind which I hide unflinching weakness, indecision, nagging anxieties, hesitancy, uncertainty, moodiness - inherited or made to measure."

In the early 1960s Storm Jameson and her historian second husband, Guy Chapman, settled in Cambridge, where he had taken a job teaching at the university. What she calls this "late period" was clearly a happy one for her. Two or three times each year they went abroad, usually to France, and stayed in small hotels. "I never, never liked running a household. Foolish, I suppose." The most agreeable thing in her entire life, she says, and something for which she would willingly have given up all the writing, has been travelling "to see things, to get away from people."

Writing replaced by reading

After Guy Chapman died in 1972, Storm Jameson spent four years writing a book about him. They had been married 48 years; she makes no attempt to pretend she does not miss him. "And then I gave up writing. I had come to an end. I just stopped. One does. At least I did." She talks in short, emphatic sentences, with dry precision, sometimes adding tart, if affectionate rejoinders. "Some of my friends have gone on writing much too long."

The writing has been replaced by reading, no longer novels now but science and "things I only half understand". She rarely leaves the still well-ordered flat, with its many books and its memories of Whitby in the shape of a handsome Chinese chest of drawers, brought back from China by her mother after a voyage as captain's wife, or a strong oak table which she had built for herself at 20. There are perhaps 30 photographs of her husband, in faded frames, on tables and shelves around the flat.

"If a prison cell were airy, with a good bed and a window, it would suit my unsociability, my distrust of people, well," Storm Jameson once wrote. The Cambridge flat may be that cell; nevertheless, she still clings with extreme reluctance, but equally extreme tenacity, to life.

It could never happen to you. Or could it?

If the Police Bill, now before parliament, becomes law, London's Metropolitan Police in common with other forces will be given extra powers.

These powers may do more to threaten the freedom of the individual, than to prevent crime.

Perhaps you think it does not affect you; that the police will only use these new powers on criminals. But, take a look at the list below. All the incidents in it could happen in certain circumstances, if the Bill becomes law.

Any one of these nasty experiences could happen to you, your family or your friends.

The examples we have quoted below represent our interpretation of the respective clauses in the Bill currently before parliament.

* You could be arrested, simply because a constable thinks you are committing a trivial offence like illegal parking and has reasonable grounds for disbelieving your name and address. [Clause 22]

* You could be stopped and searched because a police officer thinks you might use your bunch of keys to defend yourself. [Clause 1]

* You could be frisked in the street, by force. If the police think you would not understand their reasons, they do not have to give you any. [Clause 2(6)]

* Your home could be searched for evidence, even if you have done nothing wrong. [Clause 8]

* You could be locked up for up to four days without charge and refused access to a solicitor for 36 hours. [Clause 52]

* You could be stripped and intimately searched for a weapon. [Clause 49-50]

All these powers would be open to abuse. It's also worth noting that the Bill confirms that complaints against the police would still be investigated by the police themselves.

We consider that the additional powers sought in the Police Bill are unnecessary. More important, we believe they will not help the police in their vital job of fighting crime in London. For the extra powers will almost certainly lead to increased conflict between Londoners and their police force.

The Police Bill must be opposed. It must not become law. Please, if you are concerned, write to your MP at the House of Commons, and send the coupon to us to get more information.

OPPOSE THE POLICE BILL

For the information pack on the Bill, please return the coupon or ring the GLC Campaign Hotline: 633-4400.

To: The Police Committee Support Unit

Room 602, County Hall, London SE1 7PB.

I wish to tell friends and neighbours about what the Bill means, please send me the information pack on the Police Bill.

Name _____ Address _____

Keep GLC Working for London

For further details ring the Unit on 633-5944

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THE TIMES DIARY

Arms and the money

To succeed in publishing these days, with growing Third World markets to reach, it might be worth taking a SAS course. Publisher Alister Macqueen was on his way to Lagos airport, after assessing Nigeria in the wake of the new regime, when his car was rammed and he and two friends were held up by four armed men. The gang made off with their car, passports, money and luggage, leaving Macqueen with \$50 and his shirt, trousers and shoes. Fortunately, good friends and influence got him out of the country that night. "Nigeria is no place to be without a passport." Back in London and eager to warn his colleagues, Macqueen contacted *The Bookseller*. "Everyone knows the problems in Nigeria and should know better," a magazine person said unsympathetically. Besides, "the Nigerian trade bodies would be upset if anything detrimental was said." The Nigerian market was worth £12m to British publishers in 1982 and £23m the year before. Money talks... or doesn't.

● Tautology is alive and well on BBC Radio 3. Early morning listeners were informed that a set of Bach variations fell into "two symmetrical halves".

Smoke signals

Hot issues will be the talk of the retiring town of Eastbourne this summer but I doubt that warm weather will have much bearing. The fiery discussions will be of a far more sinister nature. Due, apparently, to the "public demand for cremation" the Cremation Society of Great Britain, a registered charity no less, will hold its conference there as "it is of the highest importance that those who will be called upon to supply this service in the future shall have at their disposal the fullest information gained from the best available experience," says the chillingly official notification. Not only that but foreign delegates will be attending so that comparisons can be made between British and overseas equipment and services: technical equipment (experts will be on hand to explain) and photographs of crematoria are on display too. Eight hours are also allocated to "working sessions".



"He could always sell his story to the News of the World"

Unholy writ

Rigorous steps are being taken in the PM's campaign to curb farmers' subsidies. Staff at the Ministry of Agriculture have made four separate applications for new stock of ballpoint pens, and each has been met with a "no" (go someone's got some) refusal. It is impossible to sign ministry cheques without a pen. Admirably simple tactics, Mrs Thatcher.

Eye for an eye

Predictably, the Israelis are furious about Yasser Arafat's nomination to the rectorship of Glasgow University. A member of the Knesset has suggested they should show their indignation in two ways. First, build a monument to Jack the Ripper outside the British Embassy in Tel Aviv. And then, elect the president of the IRA to honorary membership of the Israeli Authors' and Poets' Association.

● A buffet lunch and tea dance for the over-30s organized by a holiday outfit in Hendon for March 18 has attracted the interest of 125 women and only five men. The company obviously won't have any trouble keeping up to its name - Solo's.

Closet snobbery

The public lavatory at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in The Mall - or rather the lack of it at present - continues to excite the nation's passions. Things are taking a somewhat ugly turn, however. The Arts Council has suggested to the ICA's director, Bill McAlister, that visitors should be charged for using the facilities. "Considering we're the only arts centre that charges an entry fee anyway, it seems a bit much," McAlister says.

In a scrape

Things certainly aren't what they used to be, even for the heavily insulated, upper crust. At Dai Llewellyn's Deb of the Year shindig, delicately dressed damsels of distinguished pedigree were persuaded to reveal their expensively acquired etiquette - not by opening bottles of champagne but by demonstrating how to cope with a most indelicate dog's mess. Fortunately they had to use fantasy rather than the raw material. It was all in a good cause though, the National Dog Owners' Association.

PHS

The Neddy we don't need

by Graham Mather

Every serious disagreement between the TUC and government since 1979 has been marked by union threats to withdraw from the National Economic Development Council.

The time has come to call their bluff, take the unions at their word, wind Neddy up and get rid of an outmoded tripartite institution for corporate macro-economic management.

NEDC's structure, composition and aims, broadly suited to George Brown's national plan of 1967, are incompatible with the present government's approach to the development of a social market economy.

Past TUC threats to NEDC have been feints, designed to send shivers down ministerial spines. They have traded on the supposed attachment of British industry to the Neddy structure and ethos. In fact, few businessmen would miss Neddy. Even NEDC's friends admit, with Sir Richard O'Brien, that "the results that have come out of NEDC over the years have not been commensurate with the stature and authority of the members of the council".

Sir Geoffrey Chandler, the former NEDC director general, felt that "by comparison with the standing and authority of the individuals who sit on council and on the tripartite committees and of the constituencies they represent, the tangible successes of the committees must seem small".

In fact, of the little Neddies, only one deals with the expanding service sector; NEDC's failure to expand into service industries reveals a business reluctance to introduce elaborate and time-consuming committee procedures.

Those who might be expected to be predisposed in NEDC's favour appear unimpressed. William Rodgers of the SDP has said that Neddy as it is "has run its course, its force for good vitiated by the partners' use of council meetings to act out formal roles and deliver stock reactions to whatever is on the agenda". Dr David Owen is equally cool.

Among employers, such significant organizations as the British Institute of Management, the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, the Institute of Directors, the Retail Consortium and small firm representative bodies are unrepresented on the NEDC Council. Most have declared interest in breaking out of the rigid government/CBI/union tripartite framework which excludes them from direct participation. Consumer and banking interests, represented on the council, have achieved less than have nationalized industries. All would gain from a broader, less rigid forum for macro-economic discussion.

If Neddy's achievements in recent years have been sparse and its supporters few, for the TUC and the Labour leadership it has been a treasure trove of leakable reports, gloomy economic prognostications and propaganda opportunities. They have been years the chief beneficiaries of the Neddy system.

In the run-up to the 1983 general election, Neil Kinnock effectively used an unpublished NEDC report so full of gloom on unemployment, investment, unit labour costs, productivity and research and development as to have been unrecognizable to most industrialists as a portrayal of the economic climate.

If Neddy were to go, its useful parts could be salvaged. Little Neddies would prosper better directly under the Department of Trade and Industry. The Economic and Social Research Council, newly restructured, is an appropriate repository for the NEDC research effort. Ministers could consult industry or unions more flexibly outside the tripartite straightjacket, as and when necessary in a broader forum - and without the political blackmail which has been the chief characteristic of union involvement in NEDC between 1979 and 1983.

The author is head of policy unit, Institute of Directors.

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How likely is Iran to blockade the Strait of Hormuz? Rodney Cowton reports

Keeping the vital oil valve open

The upsurge of fighting between Iran and Iraq during the past fortnight has revived western fears of a disruption of oil supplies through a closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Iraq has frequently threatened to attack Iran's oil installations, and as recently as last Monday claimed to have done so, though neither Iran nor anyone else seems to have found any evidence of its alleged attack on the major Iranian oil terminal at Kharg Island. Iran has said that if its ability to export oil were destroyed, it would close the Strait of Hormuz.

A complete closure of the Strait would eliminate about 20 per cent of the non-communist world's supplies of crude oil.

On the other hand, Iran needs to export its oil to finance its war effort, and as the second largest exporter through the Strait, it is strongly in its interest to keep the waterway open as long as it can get any oil out. To close the Strait would in any case be a formidable task.

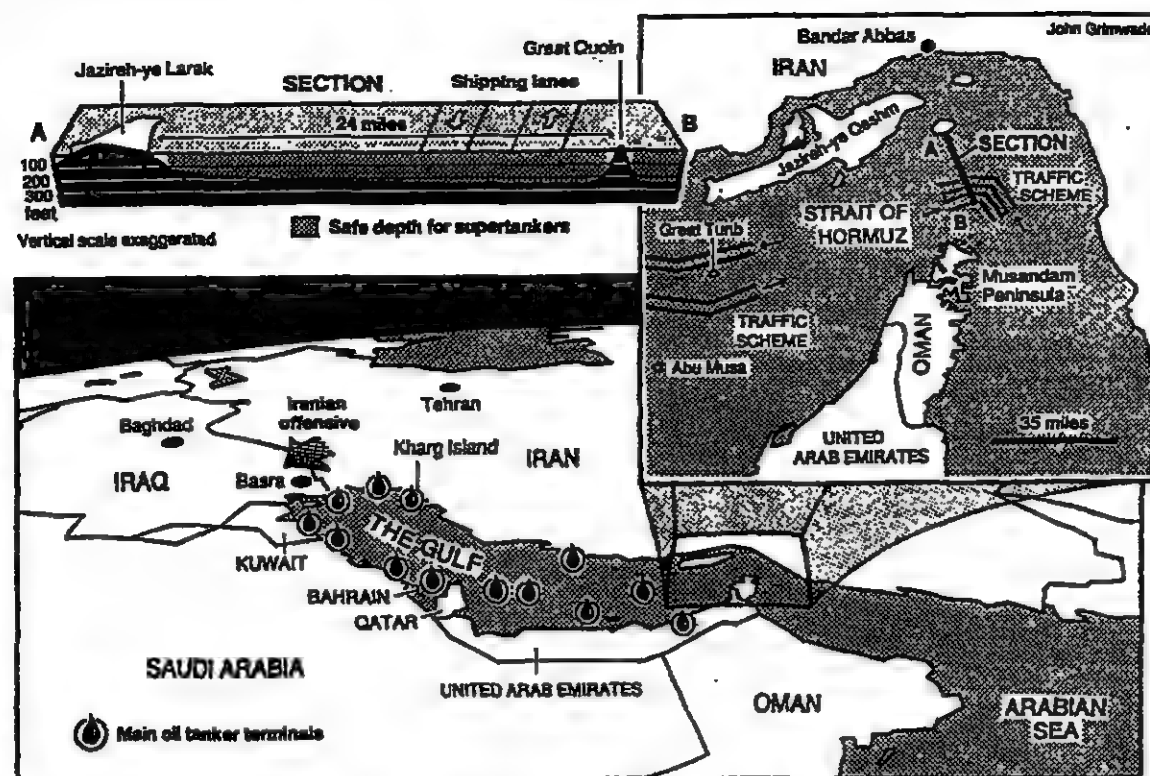
At its narrowest point it is wider than the English Channel, the roughly 23 miles being equivalent to more than 100 of the world's largest supertankers laid end to end. Any thought that the Strait could be closed by sinking physical obstacles is unrealistic.

It is also very deep, for the most part more than 200 feet, which gives three or four times the draught which fully laden tankers require.

It would be possible to mine the Strait, but it is not thought that Iran has sufficient mines, or, indeed, the right types to provide an effective barrier.

This does not, however, take account of the psychological factors. Iran would only need to say it had laid mines, without actually having done so, to make masters of tankers extremely reluctant to risk their vessels, and insurance cover might well be suspended.

However, western observers have assessed that this kind of dramatic eventuality is unlikely, given the stalemate between Iran and Iraq.



A more likely line of action would be for the Iranians to attack a single tanker by air or land-based bombardment, and this could be a powerful deterrent on other shipping.

However, it would almost certainly have the effect of bringing into play western naval power deployed in the Gulf or in the Arabian Sea. In its most potent form this is represented by an American carrier battle group, with the 50,000-ton carrier USS Midway at its heart. The Midway would have roughly 70 aircraft aboard, including, in all probability, Sea Stallion helicopters adapted for mine clearance.

President Reagan has made clear his commitment to keep the Strait open to international traffic, and there is little doubt that the Midway and its escorts, possibly with the support of two British vessels and one French frigate in the area, has the capacity to do so.

However, western observers have assessed that this kind of dramatic eventuality is unlikely, given the stalemate between Iran and Iraq.

The latest view appears to be that notwithstanding the intense ground fighting of the last two weeks, and the gains made by Iran, that stalemate has not yet been broken.

The West has, in any case, taken steps to reduce its dependence on oil from the Gulf in recent years. The most striking example of this is the United States, which is now taking only about one-fifth as much oil from the Arab members of Opec as it did in 1977.

Western Europe has roughly halved its dependence on oil from the Gulf, so that it now accounts for only about 30 per cent of supplies. The major country most vulnerable to a protracted disruption of supplies would be Japan.

One favourable factor is that stocks worldwide are relatively high, standing at about 90 days, though of this it is reckoned that about 60 days' supply are required just to keep the system fully functioning. The US has estimated its own strategic reserve as equivalent to 900 days of the current level of its imports from the Gulf.

There is also estimated to be immediately available a reserve in other countries which could offset roughly half the nine million barrels a day lost through a complete closure of the Strait.

However, one recent study, which has attempted to evaluate the risks of a major disruption of oil flows through the Strait, puts the likelihood of more than a million barrels a day being affected for more than 10 days at no higher than one chance in 50.

It does, however, warn that a greater danger than a closure of the Strait of Hormuz is the possibility of loss of production through air attacks by Iran or Iraq on the other's production facilities, or of the market for oil being destabilized as countries, worried by a possible disruption of supplies, scrambled to build up their stocks, thereby driving demand to the limit of the world's productive capacity.

The World Petroleum Market to 1986, by Data and Decisions, Stratton House, London W1.

Bernard Levin: the way we live now

A plague on all their palliatives

Well, bully for Brodifacoum: but I thought of that, too, in my column ten and a quarter years ago, and said that when we had finished saluting the clever scientists who had perfected a poison that could refresh the parts that Warfarin couldn't reach.

... we shall then adjourn until December 4th, 1993, when we shall once again forgetful and dizzy toast to the scientists who, ever-mindful of our interests, have developed a rat-poison as far superior to Sorex CR as is Sorex CR to Warfarin.

The open-air life which John Young leads stands him in good stead; he will therefore certainly be around on the appointed day ten years hence, and although Lad-broke's will not offer such generous odds on me, I think I may yet surprise the actuaries. Give or take a couple of months, therefore, I look forward to sharing with you all a decade from now the amazing, unprecedented, wholly unexpected news that there are rats and mice whose favourite form of elevenness is a Brodifacoum sandwich, which they swear is what keeps their coats so sleek and their whiskers so crisp.

It was St Paul who pointed out that God is not mocked. It did not occur to him (or if it did he kept quiet about it) that God might be a rat. But even if God is a rat-catcher I suspect that he is still not mocked, at any rate with impunity. For the point of the column in which I made my uncannily precise long-range forecast was that the rats and the rat-poison are no different from the people and the people-poison. Antibiotics were discovered, praised, and adopted for general use against a wide range of micro-organisms, which they slaughtered in numbers comparable to the rats and mice which went down under the massive cavalry charge of the Knights of

Warfarin and their successors, the Sorex Hardieries. But the last laugh was given to the micro-organisms, for many of them developed an immunity, to virtually anything ending in -cin, comparable to the resistance put up by the vermin, and just as it has proved necessary for the agricultural scientists to raise another new regiment, the Brodifacoum Light Horse, so new and more powerful germ-killers have been required to deal with the new and more powerful germs.

I am sorry, but I must quote once more from that prescient column of a decade ago:

... if you feel depressed... and go to a doctor... he will provide you with a prescription for tranquillizers. If you take the stipulated dose, you may feel less depressed... After a bit, however, a puzzling effect will become apparent: the pills will begin to seem less efficacious. Returning to the doctor, you will point this out, and he will recommend a slight increase in the dose. You will be much relieved to find that the increased dose is as effective at dealing with the depression as the old, lesser dose was. But after a bit, a puzzling effect will become apparent...

When will we realize that Nature is cleverer than we are? Do you remember DDT? It was hailed as the answer to every problem of the countryside - Colorado beetle, blackfly, locusts, potato-blight, broomrape, hollandise - there was nothing it wouldn't kill. As, indeed, turned out to be the case, to such an extent that all of a sudden you couldn't get a measure of DDT at the jug-and-bottle for any consideration, not even ready money. I did not follow that story as closely as I did that of the rats and the rat-poison, so I do not know where it has got to now. But I am willing to bet that just as there were scientists

to hail DDT as the answer for every agricultural problem to puzzle the human race from Cro-Magnon man to Peter Walker, so there were scientists (the same ones, I wouldn't wonder) to hail the new super-DDT as the answer to all those problems and the problems caused by the ordinary, unimproved DDT without the Miracle Ingredient that Makes All the Difference.

How many more times do Horace and I have to say it before the world will listen? Once more? Very well, then. *Naturem expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.* Or, for any rats who know no Latin and are reading this, while breakfasting off a steaming bowl of Warfarin with Sorex CR sprinkled on the top, you may drive out nature with a pitchfork, but she will always come running back.

Somewhere, somewhere, somewhere we must stop believing that the hair of the dog will heal its bites. Sooner or later we shall have to persuade the impetuous, but fatally poisoned stream to flow in the other direction. I do not know, and it makes no difference to my theme, whether there is any truth in the legend that dock-leaves, with their soothing juice, are always found near nettles, with their poison that needs soothing. I do know that for many centuries country folk who cut themselves with an earthy spade would clap a cobweb on the wound, and were smiled at by all the *bienséances* for such superstition, until those spores floated in through Fleming's laboratory window and proved the old folk right.

These things take time. I do not suppose, therefore, that the world's attitude to nature and its slow certainty will have changed entirely within the next ten years. But I cordially invite you, to synchronize your watches again and meet on this spot on February 29th 1994 (no, it isn't Leap Year - make it March 1), when we can greet the scientists' discovery of a new and much improved rat-poison with our thumbs to our noses. Light refreshments will be served, including canapés of Warfarin, Sorex CR, Brodifacoum, DDT, penicillin and Valium. Rats welcome.

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David Watt

How the Russians can save Reagan

Last week President Reagan was subjected to a startlingly unfamiliar ordeal. He found himself on the podium of a White House news conference, facing a hostile press.

The first question set the tone: "Mr President, the marines you sent to Lebanon 17 months ago are now being withdrawn on your orders. Considering their inability to achieve their peace-keeping mission, and the casualties they suffered, has the United States lost credibility in the region? Has Syria won? And where do we go from here?"

Given the normal sycophancy of the White House press corps on these occasions, this catechism must be regarded as a shattering piece of activity. Nor was it a piece of maverick enterprise by some Democrat reporter. It was followed by a barrage of insinuations that the head of state had been fiddling on his Californian ranch while Beirut burned; to which the President replied with a quite uncharacteristic combination of heat and uncertainty.

The whole episode, in short, was the best possible proof of how unimpressed by the Lebanese experience both the Administration and American public opinion have been. Much has been written about the implications of the American departure for the Lebanon and for the Middle East region as a whole. The exchange which I have just quoted suggests that the perceptions that Americans have of the debacle may be just as significant.

Some of these perceptions are implicit in the words which the questioner used: "Has Syria won?" Here we come at once upon the deeply ingrained tendency of Americans in general, and the American media in particular, to see all issues in prizefight terms. The proper role for American soldiers must be to worst an enemy. Why else would they be operating outside the US? An enemy, Syria, has been duly identified in the Middle East by reference to the fact that it is hostile to a friend, Israel, and friendly to another enemy, the Soviet Union. Therefore, if American soldiers retire without worsting the Syrians, it follows that they have lost and the Syrians have won - and perhaps, by extension, the Israelis have lost and the Soviet Union has won.

To be fair to the American public, this simplistic farago is probably how most of the Middle East sees matters as well and because of that fact, the myth has acquired a genuine reality. The US really has suffered an important loss of prestige, and probably of influence, because people believe it so. But whose fault is that? Answer: a long succession of American presidents, culminating in Ronald Reagan, who have fed two fatal beliefs.

The first, which has been in currency ever since the Truman Doctrine was promulgated in 1947, is that the US is, and ought to be, capable of holding the forces of darkness at bay anywhere on the face of the globe. The second, which has always been a weakness of American armies, but has become an absolute obsession since the fearful carnage of Vietnam, is that this task can, and should be, accomplished without loss of American lives.

The first frequently causes the US to put its prestige at stake in precarious regional situations where the outcome turns on factors over which no outside agency has much chance of establishing any real control: the second, which ought to

have the beneficial effect of obliging American governments to concentrate on political rather than military persuasions, sometimes does no more than cause military solutions to be adopted in a half-hearted fashion. The spectacle of the US Navy standing safely off Beirut, blasting shells more or less into the void as a face-saving exercise, is the pitiful *reductio ad absurdum* of the twin fallacies.

What happens now at the American end of this story? It is useless, of course, to expect that the Reagan Administration will overnight renounce the Truman Doctrine or shake off the national instinct to try to solve problems by throwing money and technology at them. What is clear, however, is that the President is in quite serious political trouble as a result of what has happened. It is, indeed, beginning to look as if he will be more vulnerable on foreign policy than on anything else in the presidential campaign, which is why Walter Mondale and the other Democratic aspirants have been devoting so much attention to it.

As things stand at present Mr Reagan has not got a lot going for him. It is true that there is now an outside chance that American diplomacy, and American leverage, will unlock the road to a solution of the Namibian problem and a curtailment of Soviet influence in southern Africa. But the intentions of the South African government in that matter are still highly suspect; and in any case a claim to have evicted the Cubans from somewhere as remote from obvious American interests as Angola would not necessarily cut a lot of office in an American election campaign, even if it could be justified. Likewise, Central and South America seem likely, for the foreseeable future, to cause far more trouble for the Reagan campaign than opportunities for successful statesmanship.

What is left, then? There is not much more electoral mileage to be got out of further calls to arms against the Red Peril. For one thing, the American public seems to be tiring of them; for another, they provoke the awkward question: "What have you lot been doing about the Red Peril for the last three and a half years, then?" The logical conclusion is that nothing much remains except to renege on a dialogue with the Soviet Union and to try to extract as much from a peace platform as credibility and Russian suspicions will allow.

It is perhaps a bit too early to say sure that the President will accept this logic. It would, after all, require contortionist skills to avoid all the side-effects of such a majestic flip-flop. Nevertheless, every report I hear confirms that these thoughts are in the Washington air just now. People in and around the Administration, who nine months ago were the coldest of cold warriors, are now talking about a new framework for the arms negotiations and even, since Beirut, about bringing the Russians back into the Middle East peace process, from which they were so carefully but fruitlessly excluded by Henry Kissinger a decade ago.

I do not know if Mr Chernomko has any sense of humour whatever. Probably not. But if anything could cause those stony features to crack into a mirthless smile, it would be the realization that Ronald Reagan needs his assistance in order to be re-elected President of the United States.

Philip Howard

As Presidents, they're great comedians

To consider politics a comedy and politicians clowns is one approach. To adopt it as a comprehensive principle may be going too far. The original meaning of "clown" was a private person who opted out of public life, and treated the whole business as a farce. But the year of the American presidential election provides, among other things, a grand show of political comedy.

This is not to argue that the election of the most powerful officeholder in the world is unimportant. And the method of election, although it has its eccentricities, is more democratic than in most other states on earth. The election is more democratic than, for instance, the ways in which the British get their prime ministers. But comedy, and particularly the wisecrack and cracker-barrel philosophy, are traditional aspects of presidential politics.

I am sure that a potent part of the political attraction of the present President, dear old Hopsalong, is his obvious good humour and his deadly way with the one-liners. Remember the stream of quite tolerable jokes that came out of the surgery after he had been shot in 1981. Greeting his aides on the morning after surgery, he exclaimed: "Hi, fellas. I knew it would be too much to hope that we could skip a staff meeting. When told how the others would react to the assassination attempt, he said: 'That's great news. We'll have to get four bedpans and have a reunion.'"

President Reagan sent a characteristically jovial message to the Hollywood Academy Awards coronation ceremony on the following evening. Introducing it, Johnny Carson said: "I was tempted to call him and ask if he had any more of those one-liners I could use."

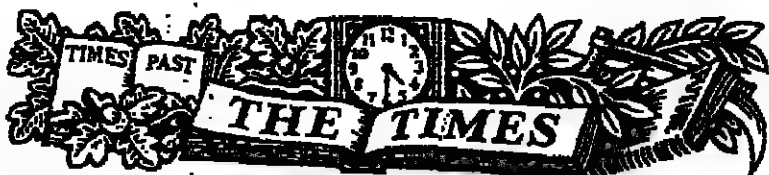
But even less professional comedians have felt the need as President to make wisecracks. Gerry Ford, taunted by Lyndon Johnson for having played football too long without a helmet, turned up for speech with his old college football helmet. When the flaps didn't fit over his ears, he grinned, and said

that it was because "heads tend to swell in Washington." After Kennedy's inaugural address, Nixon met "old Sorensen, one of Kennedy's aides, and said, 'I wish I had said some of those things.' Sorensen wanted to know which bits: 'That part about 'Ask not what your country can do for you?' 'No,' said Nixon, 'the part that starts, 'I do solemnly swear.'"

Even Jimmy Carter, widely regarded as having no atom of humour, occasionally had a go. When touring the Great Pyramid at Giza, the guide told him that the vast erection took only 20 years to build. J. Carter: "I'm surprised that a government organization could do it that quickly." Not jokes to have us slapping our thighs, and rolling about helpless on the floor, I agree. But they exemplify the healthy old presidential tradition of not taking the awesome burdens of office too heavily.

The originator of the tradition was the greatest President, Abraham Lincoln. His life can be seen as a string of good jokes. The foreign diplomat who found him polishing his shoes. "What, Mr President, you black your own boots?" "Yes, whose do you black?" The two Quaker ladies discussing the contest between Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. "I think Jefferson will succeed." "Why does this think so?" "Because Jefferson is a praying man." "And so is Abraham, a praying man." "Yes," said the first, "but the Lord will think Abraham is joking."

Lincoln was much attacked at the time by the pompous for his coarse, low jokes, and his unpretentious, unpolished, and unbuttoned. When asked how it felt to be President, he replied: "You have heard about the man tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail? A man in the crowd asked how he liked it, and his reply was that if it wasn't for the honour of the thing, he would much rather swat a flea." Abe, the dedicated, the healthy truth that it is possible to be deadly serious and still to make jokes. Let us have some good ones in election year.



THUGS AT THE TRIBUNAL

Sadly, Sir Michael Giddings and his wife are not the first victims of the unBritish nastiness that has tainted the succession of inquiries into the realignment of the A1 road through Highgate. The disgraceful treatment meted out to them - at whoever's hands - is different in degree, not in kind from the handling of his predecessors as inspector. They, like Sir Michael, have been jostled, sworn at, locked in rooms and threatened. Over a period of ten years these inspectors - not always, it must be said, of the calibre to take such an exposed public position - have faced an outbreak of civic hysteria that, were it not so localized, would speak ill of the nation's capacity to adapt to necessary but sometimes painful change.

Yet the dynamics of the Archway Road issue are peculiar. It does not diminish one jot the insufferable behaviour of the middle-class hooligans of Highgate to recall that the Archway Road building project has been a chapter of accidents, political ineptitude and civil service arrogance. During the decade the Department of Transport has played fast and loose with facts and procedure. Rational road planning is not served by the department's wish to extend the capacity of the A1 through Highgate while apparently abandoning entirely a former scheme to enhance the road's capacity a mile or so farther on in Hampstead Garden Suburb. The depart-

ment's reputation for consistency was not aided by the pusillanimity of the former Transport Secretary Mr Rodgers in the face of (Labour-supported) protest. It is never likely to win prizes for open government either for its wilful refusal to trust the public with its best estimates of traffic on which the case for a new section of the Archway Road was based.

The failure of the series of planning inquiries to produce, for the Archway Road, a workable recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport has contributed to a general sense that the system of public participation through quasi-judicial tribunals in contested road or building schemes has failed. It is indeed easy to highlight the difficulties - notably in the Sizewell inquiry - of squeezing issues of national energy policy (which hinge of course on fiscal policy) into the confines of an inquiry about town and country planning matters. Only the skill of the inspector in the Stansfeld inquiry, an able QC, has kept that show on the road. But while the case for a different approach to these "major inquiries" - various nuclear-related issues are just over the horizon here - is strong, it should not spill over, yet, into dismay at the conduct of all planning tribunals.

Yet, recent inquiries such as the M40 extension have presented a worrying picture of the state appearing to pay only lip service to the involvement of the

public in proceedings. But the planning inquiry, for road building, remains a rough and ready solution to the vexed problem of giving the public a say (when they are likely to disagree profoundly with the destruction of their homes or fields) in decision-making by ministers who, in theory at least, must place local interest within the canvas of national transport policy. It is an imperfect system, not embellished by the sometimes cynical manipulation of evidence by either side. The position of ministers as both judge and jury in their own cause will always provoke public suspicion, however open-minded ministers are when they receive inspectors' reports.

There is scope for improvement in the conduct of these tribunals and the fifteen or so months which it ought to take the Department of Transport to reconvene the Archway inquiry should be well used. The Lord Chancellor's office may have a role in tightening the rules for the presentation of evidence and hearing witnesses. The inspectorial terms of reference need to be wider, to admit the broad picture of traffic and transport in the capital; the government's case for a new road deserves the fullest exposition. Most important, Sir Michael's successor deserves not just a better prepared brief but the fullest personal protection. To allow thugs further to disrupt decision making would be intolerable.

A SALUTE TO THE BALLOT PAPER

The government's decision to send observers to the March 25 presidential elections in El Salvador will be predictably criticized and predictably defended, and neither side of the House will be able to display much conviction. The elections will take place because the calendar is fixed, and we will send observers because we are the allies of the United States, and because we sent observers last time. The Government's case would be more plausible if it took a closer and more consistent interest in Central America and the Caribbean - it shows no signs of acting on the select committee's recommendations to restore and increase our representation in the area - and the Opposition's arguments would be more convincing if they did not ignore so many of the issues at stake.

The last elections were rapidly overshadowed by the Falklands war, and the reports of observers received little publicity. It should be remembered that in turnout and in spirit they greatly exceeded expectations, and the mechanistic explanations of the Left - that it was an obligatory vote, that the citizen needed the stamp on his identity card - were not convincing. The impression was that the ordinary Salvadoran decidedly wanted peace, and hoped that voting would some-

how bring it. The elections were a defeat for the guerrillas.

They were not, however, a victory for those Salvadorans who most genuinely believe in elections, as they returned to power a right wing coalition many of whose members have no democratic intentions at all. The Christian Democrats of Jose Napoleon Duarte won the elections in the sense that they remained the largest party and got 40 per cent of the valid vote; but they lost power to the coalition dominated by Major Roberto D'Aubuisson and his Arena party. It may have been the case that in the conditions prevailing, where various Social Democratic groups could not participate, a possible Centre-Left coalition was deprived of crucial support.

If that was the case in 1982, there is no reason to think that matters have changed. The enhanced national and international legitimacy that the Salvadoran government might have gained from the last elections has been lost by its failure to control the death-squads, a failure far more damaging than the occasional military victory obtained by guerrillas in "some provincial town, delays in agrarian reform, or even the atrocities committed

by guerrillas on civilians. They are the perpetual justification of the extreme left - and the Salvadoran left certainly has extremes - and the strongest argument for those outside El Salvador who wish to wash their hands of the whole business.

Dr Kissinger last month presented his arguments against taking that course. Where the Contadora group argues that the conflict ought not to be an east-west one, his commission finds that it is; and where Contadora advocates disarmament, Dr Kissinger sees no solution without greater exercise of force. He finds the credibility of the United States at stake and on that most revolutionary would agree. For the entire region that cannot be a matter of indifference.

Our sending observers for a short election period is essentially *un saludo a la bandera* - a salute to the flag. Technical arrangements are only a minor part of a proper election in comparison with the basic securities for all that Dr Kissinger also sees as essential to the election. Whichever flag our government is saluting, British observers should interpret their remit broadly, remember 1982, and perhaps find a salute to those Salvadorans who have not yet given up.

SPANISH DEMOCRACY'S ACHILLES HEEL

In the last year of Franco's life two things were commonly said about the Basque problem. One was that there was no solution to it without democracy. The other was that the Franco regime's handling of it would bequeath to his successors an insoluble problem which might render Spain's transition to democracy impossible.

The second statement has not proved quite right, but near enough for many people to forget the first. Spain made the transition to democracy, but democracy has not yet solved the Basque problem which, with its daily harvest of killing and counter-killing, now looks almost as endemic as that of Northern Ireland. Basque terrorism and the methods used to fight it remain the weakest point in Spanish democracy. Terrorism exasperates all those in Spain, particularly in the armed forces, who yearn for security and order; and in some of them it keeps alive a nostalgia for the Franco state.

Meanwhile those directly involved in fighting terrorism continue to resort to methods which are in the long run incompatible with democracy: torture, assassination, censorship. The elected government in Madrid is obliged to cover these abuses to some extent because of its need to retain the loyalty of the forces involved. Yet it knows that they help to perpetuate the

problem by giving terrorism a spurious respectability in the eyes of a part of the Basque public.

The parallel with Northern Ireland holds in so far as the majority of Basques repudiate terrorism and wish to be protected against it. Sunday's election result proves that, if proof were needed. It does not hold in the sense that there is no clear division in the Basque country between a loyalist and a separatist community. Even if a majority of the inhabitants were born elsewhere, majority sentiment is nationalist in the broad sense. The argument is not about Basque national identity, on which there is virtual consensus. It is about the degree of autonomy it is realistic to expect. For the parallel to be anything like exact the SDLP would have to be the majority party in Northern Ireland, and thus the natural recipient of any powers handed back to Stormont.

Were that the case, no doubt the SDLP would favour the maximum devolution of powers, as does the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV). What holds the Madrid government back from conceding such demands is fear of loyalist backlash, not in the region itself but elsewhere in Spain, and particularly in the armed forces.

Considering all that, and without any illusion that the

problem is solved or even nearing a solution, the ruling Socialist party (PSOE) can take some comfort from the result. In spite of being laden with the odium attaching to central government, in spite of a continued recession in the Basque country to which terrorism certainly contributes but for which central government must expect to be blamed, the PSOE increased its own share of the vote from 14 to 23 per cent while that of Herri Batasuna (the equivalent of Sinn Féin) fell from 16 to 13 per cent. Undoubtedly, the PSOE benefited from a sympathy vote after the murder of one of its local leaders last Thursday. In the circumstances that is significant in itself, as is the high turn-out which confounded all predictions.

The PNV also increased its share of the vote (from 37.7 to 42 per cent), but loses its overall majority in the Basque parliament. That hardly weakens its central argument, which is that terrorism can be most effectively combated not by "dirty war" tactics but by placing real responsibility and power in Basque hands. The 1981 "harmonisation" law, which sought to claw back devolved powers by equating the Basque country with other Spanish regions, was a mistake. The Basques have an unmistakable national identity, as do the Catalans, while other Spanish regions are precisely that.

Lord Mayhew says the plight of certain categories of dissidents is as bad now as it ever was. And Afghanistan is certainly comparable with the overrunning of Eastern Europe.

The Soviets are still following the teachings of Lenin, who said somewhere that at a certain stage they should work through the peace movements.

It is complacent in the extreme to

sit back and relax just because there is a full in events. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance. If America finally gets tired of European criticism and pulls out there could be no greater calamity.

Mr Podhoretz (feature, February 16), don't go home. There are quite a few of us out here who like having Americans around.

J. HAYES, The New House, East Grafton, Marlborough, Wiltshire.

Getting movement Head teachers on probation in Europe

From Mrs Pamela Entwistle

Sir, Your leading article (February 24) on the French lorry drivers' dispute rightly drew attention to the absurdity of customs checks within the European internal market.

The real danger is that the origins of this incident will be forgotten and the underlying practices will continue with no more than lip service to reform.

Italy agreed to take on 850 more customs officers; the European Council sets a date of 1987 for the introduction of a single administrative document. These are not the actions of a Community committed to the early removal of internal border controls.

Each of the 10 countries with a voice on the Council and the civil servants who support them must cease looking for excuses to maintain the status quo.

Delays at frontier crossings cost the European consumer some £7bn a year and this is only one of the many technical barriers to trade which result in our being no nearer to a common market than we were when internal tariffs were abolished in 1980.

We urgently need to make it easier for individuals to cross frontiers, whether as businessmen or tourists; to simplify customs procedures and the collection of statistics to reduce frontier delays; and to work for a single market for European products by developing European standards and testing procedures.

These will do more to stimulate the European economy and reduce unemployment than any change in the common agricultural policy or revamping of the Budget to give Britain a rebate.

A good start would be for France to reconvene the meetings of the ministers for trade in the 10 member states sitting in council, which have lapsed since she took over the presidency from Greece at the beginning of the year.

Yours faithfully, PAMELA ENTWISTLE, Director, European Group, Millbank Tower, Millbank, SW1, February 27.

Bringing death to life

From Mr J. M. Waterson

Sir, Roger Scruton (feature, February 21) has a point. At Blickling the National Trust preserves a mausoleum, and an ice house too, for that matter. In the nature of such places there is a certain lifelessness about them.

But these are scarcely typical. In one wing at Blickling, teams of volunteers are repairing Mordlake tapestries from the house under the supervision of two professional conservators. Mary Queen of Scots would surely see them as kindred spirits. During the coming year there will be twelve concerts there.

If Dr Scruton would care to pedal out of Cambridge to Wimpole, he would find that the Trust has restored the Home Farm, which was completely derelict when the property was acquired in 1976. The rare breeds of cattle, sheep and goats displayed there were seen by 72,000 visitors last summer.

A few miles in the other direction, at Anglesey Abbey, the trust has brought a water mill back into working order and flour is again being ground. The gardens are maintained by a staff of five and the trust welcomes Lord Fairhaven's close involvement and guidance. He and his family live in the Abbey during the winter, and during the summer months in the Garden House. Is this the "dead hand" of the National Trust?

As Dr Scruton rightly supposes, the Blickling mausoleum, which Joseph Bonomi designed in the form of the pyramid and which has not been used since the eighteenth century, is, in purely financial terms, a liability.

Yours faithfully, MERLIN WATERSOON, The Old Rectory, Saxthorpe, Norfolk, February 24.

Scientific swallow

From Mr E. W. F. Tomlin

Sir, With regard to your leader, "Votaries of science" (February 25) in which you speak of the Royal Society as having "swallowed in its day" a number of persons of distinction, though "unknown for their familiarity with the map of science", the inclusion of the present Emperor of Japan in that number is unfortunate. His Majesty is in his own right a distinguished marine biologist.

Yours faithfully, E. W. F. TOMLIN, 31 Rodan Street, W14, February 26.

Africa's empty larder

From Dr Eric Clapton

Sir, You are right to urge immediate provision of food aid as short term relief to the drought-stricken countries of southern Africa. And equally correct to assert that improved agricultural efficiency should be the longer-term policy aim of these countries (leader, February 15).

Your suggested policies for improving farm production are mainly right. Pricing policies to increase smallholder profits and allow market forces to provide farmer incentives are crucial. Distribution systems for fertilisers and other inputs could be improved, but will not produce dramatic production increases.

The tenure systems in Africa do

not seriously hamper farm production, as do the tenancy systems in Asia; so changes here will not have great impact. Providing aid in the form of expert manpower is absolutely right, especially in the direction of adaptive agricultural research which is beginning to throw new light on production constraints at farm level and on the means of improving smallholder farming systems.

But even if these things are done, as you suggest, I think you are too optimistic about the outcome. Africa does not comprise vast areas of fertile soil, nor will the green revolution of Asia be replicated in Africa. The immense ecological variation of that continent would limit the spread of any new, high yielding seed varieties. Developing adaptive research programmes relevant to the problems of small-

holder agriculture will take time and cost a good deal.

Finally, your proposition that aid should be conditional on the provision of incentive policies for agriculture, though unpopular and indeed unfortunate, is nevertheless necessary. The leaders of an increasing number of countries in Africa have shown themselves unable to use power for the benefit of their peoples and have in some cases seriously harmed their domestic agricultures, as in Tanzania and Mozambique.

Yours faithfully, ERIC CLAPTON, Agrarian Development Unit, School of Rural Economics and Related Studies, Wye College (University of London), Near Ashford, Kent, February 17.

From Mr Richard Cooke
Sir, Sir Keith Joseph's proposals for placing head teachers on probation are long overdue. The effect of a weak head on a school is total and devastating. His position is necessary that of the (let's hope, benevolent) dictator and there must be hundreds, if not thousands, of teachers and many more pupils who languish under weak leadership, with its consequent low standards of discipline, which affect every aspect of a school's life.

How demoralising that situation is. Governments and presidents come and go, but a head teacher is there to stay, unchallenged until retirement.

Of course their professional association will complain, motivated entirely by self-interest. Far more seriously, rank-and-file teachers cannot complain, for it will be their very own head teacher whose reference will be crucial when they seek a move to more favourable surroundings.

I feel free to speak, having left the profession altogether after seven years. Like so many others, I regard this as one of the most important reforms that the education system requires.

Yours faithfully, RICHARD COOKE, Sudbury House, West Street, Wrotham, Kent, February 28.

From Mr Stewart Lack

Sir, There have been a great number of crackpot ideas put forward in the realm of education, but the recent scheme of a "probationary period" for headmasters put forward by Sir Keith Joseph just about takes the biscuit. It is a great pity that we so seldom seem to have anybody at the head of the Ministry of Education who has the necessary experience to initiate really effective measures. (Perhaps, however, it is the "Sir Humphrey" of the situation who is responsible?)

Splits at Strasbourg

From Mr Adam Ferguson, MEP for West Strathclyde (European Democrat (Conservative))

Sir, When Mr Geoff Harris, a functionary of the "Socialist Group Secretariat" of the European Parliament, writes (February 25) of "deep divisions in the Conservative Party" about the future of the Community it must strike most of your readers as pretty rich. The deep divisions are on the other side.

The British Labour contingent in the Parliament has for five years been split right down the middle on the question of Community membership, to the despair and scorn of the (Continental) Socialist Group. One member has actually defected to join the Independents.

And now the Continental Socialists are observing that the new British Labour candidates so far selected for the Euro-elections next June are of known anti-Community views almost to a man. Those views are in marked contrast to the new patched-up party line, as well as to the opinions of certain sitting Labour MEPs who are being pushed out into the cold.

Mr Harris writes, too, about "the possible break-up of the European Conservative Group" in the European Parliament. He should know that there is no such animal. He is reverting to the canard, promoted by Lady Castle, that the British Conservatives in the Parliament, who are members of the European Democratic Group, have plans to split apart.

We have no such plans, as your own correspondent was assured in Strasbourg 10 days ago. The group, of course, would welcome adherents from other national parties in the Community of similar beliefs to our own.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant, ADAM FERGUSON, 9 Addison Crescent, W4, February 25.

Farmers under fire

From Sir Paul Hawkins, MP for Norfolk South West (Conservative)

Sir, Why did Mr David Hart (February 15) attack farmers so bitterly instead of being constructive? (I hope he is not even a distant aide of the PM. His idea that a minority can be ignored and insulted is not hers.)

Yes, the system does encourage large scale company farming. I have fought this device since the sale of my country smallholdings for years. But why not suggest ways in which family farms can be encouraged?

Should not farming companies pay at least the same taxes as owner occupiers? Should production over certain quantities per farm be paid for at a lower price per gallon or per tonne? Certainly I support farmers being subject to planning laws.

But does not Mr Hart know the system has been and is a real insurance for the nation and has given housewives a varied and plentiful diet? Would he rather be fed in Poland?

Finally, since Norfolk often seems in mind when the phrase "destroying the countryside" is used, does he know:

1. Until the enclosures large areas such as Breckland were hedgeless heaths - sheep and bastard walks. Doubtless he would then have objected to the hedges being planted.

2. Part of Norfolk is fenland reclaimed by Vermuyden's schemes, and always had dykes, not hedges. Norfolk is one of the most beautiful and varied of counties. Ponds are being made, not filled in, and trees are being planted by the thousands.

I offer to take Mr Hart on a day's drive from my home - and give him lunch - during the summer recess and show him ponds, well kept hedges, wonderful walks - and I wager he will rarely be out of sight of trees.

Yours truly, PAUL HAWKINS, House of Commons, February 19.

From Mr Lindsey Bullen

Sir, Whatever one's politics, it is becoming clear that Sir Keith Joseph has a shrewd understanding of our state schools and their shortcomings. It is difficult to understand how the teachers' organisations can have any reservations about his recent proposal (report, February 28) that there should be a probationary period for head teachers.

It is clear in my experience that the machinery for appointing head teachers is woefully inadequate. Qualities of man-management, dynamic leadership and a flair for public relations and innovation are some of the qualities least revealed by the present system.

Instead we have successful candidates who have impressive qualifications and little else, or whizz-kids too young to command respect from anybody, including the pupils.

But if there is to be a probationary period, who is to decide if things are going well? The best people to ask are the staff, but, short of a secret opinion poll, they will be unwilling to say anything negative in case their own promotion prospects are jeopardised. Witness the passion of a staff room and yet the strangely muted staff meeting.

An inspection? Not until a team of inspectors had taught in the school for at least a term and experienced the frustration of sitting on sterile school committees and sub-committees, the frustration of teaching in badly cleaned and badly heated classrooms with few textbooks, but seeing thousands spent on public-appeal computers - could inspectors even begin to gauge the effectiveness of the head teacher?

I am fully behind Sir Keith's theories because he is saying things which we as teachers have thought, but not dared say for years. Let's see now whether realisation will follow.

Yours faithfully, LINDSEY BULLEN, 8 Baycliffe Close, Cambridge, February 28.

From Mr Stewart Lack

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Yours truly, PAUL HAWKINS, House of Commons, February 19.

Royal broadcast

From Mrs W. Q. Roberts

Sir, In all the references to the Christmas broadcast one simple fact has been overlooked. The Queen is head of the Church and as such Her Majesty's approach to the world's problems deserves nothing but praise.

Yours faithfully, JANET ROBERTS, Stone Walls, Newton St Loe, Bath, Avon.

holder agriculture will take time and cost a good deal.

Finally, your proposition that aid should be conditional on the provision of incentive policies for agriculture, though unpopular and indeed unfortunate, is nevertheless necessary. The leaders of an increasing number of countries in Africa have shown themselves unable to use power for the benefit of their peoples and have in some cases seriously harmed their domestic agricultures, as in Tanzania and Mozambique.

Yours faithfully, ERIC CLAPTON, Agrarian Development Unit, School of Rural Economics and Related Studies, Wye College (University of London), Near Ashford, Kent, February 17.

A glittering prize at Cambridge

From Dr Peter Laslett, FBA

Sir, I write as an individual fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, to protest against the content and the tone of the discussion about the mastership of the college in your paper (February 25) and in others.

The mastership of Trinity is regarded by academics as a particularly desirable position, a reward in a sense for a very successful career in their own profession. It is a distinction which is also an office of collegiate responsibility, with a prestige which stretches to some degree beyond the university world.

This is as it should be. Every profession needs such positions. But we look like losing the mastership of Trinity to the politicians. It is being talked about as if it were a peculiarly appropriate consolation prize for a highly accomplished but finally unfortunate political personality.

What is more, our mastership seems to have become one of the established topics of silly season journalism, which is now pursued all year round by all the papers. I protest against this too.

It is appropriate that a member of our society should now repeat what was said by a fellow of Trinity when a political personage was first suggested for the position in the 1960s. We don't exist to cushion the fall of failing politicians.

Yours etc, PETER LASLETT, Trinity College, Cambridge, February 26.

Charities and VAT

From Mr Tim Yeo, MP for Suffolk South (Conservative)

Sir, I would like, on behalf of the Charities' VAT Reform Group, representing over 300 charities, to correct some of the misleading comments made by Lord Bruce-Gardyne in his article, "No charity for the charities" (February 15).

The Charities' VAT Reform Group does not have an annual pre-Budget meeting with the Chancellor; it has never claimed that VAT is payable on donations and only seeks to gain relief on charitable activities to bring charities into line with statutory authorities and commercial companies. The Spastics Society's research has shown that there are now 200,000 active registered charities in this country.

Lord Bruce-Gardyne's first main objection, that VAT relief would not necessarily benefit the most popular and deserving charities, can equally be applied to the other forms of fiscal benefit and concession that charities receive. The Government in which Lord Bruce-Gardyne was a Treasury minister substantially expanded tax concessions to charities on an entirely unselective basis.

Nor do we need to be reminded of the "crazy paving" within the tax system. Lord Bruce-Gardyne showed himself willing to extend the haphazard tax system during the last Government by announcing VAT relief for health authorities as an inducement to privatize certain services.

However desirable reform of the tax system must be, it should be stressed that each year the members of the Charities' VAT Reform Group are losing about £10m, money which Lord Bruce-Gardyne himself points out could be used for other vital services.

Finally, I, and many others connected with charities, find it offensive that genuine charitable activity is equated with the work of football clubs.

However, I welcome his recognition that VAT relief should not be withheld on grounds of cost or administrative complexity.

Yours faithfully, TIM YEO, Chairman, Charities' VAT Reform Group, 12 Park Crescent, W1.

The Oman contract

From Mr David Leigh

Sir, Woodrow Wyatt (feature, February 25) is quite free to try and persuade your readers that attempts by private commercial concerns to pay Mr Mark Thatcher for "consultancy" are intimate matters best not pried into.

But, as one of the authors of the articles about Mark Thatcher which he attacks, I am perhaps entitled to say that the central point he makes is, as a matter of fact, untrue.

Sir Woodrow says the Prime Minister was "allowing him to be with her for part of the time on her travels: something which was known to the press at the time and then excited no comment".

Mark Thatcher's arrival at the summer palace of the Sultan of Oman on Cementation's behalf, on the same afternoon as Mrs Thatcher's official arrival there, was not known to the press. Nor, of course, was the reason for his presence.

This was one of the facts which puzzled *The Observer* when we began our investigation. I am sure your own correspondent covering that trip will confirm that Woodrow Wyatt is not writing accurately.

More than 60 per cent of all new cars sold in Britain are bought by businesses. Every car maker of note is battling to increase its share of this £7 billion-a-year market

Company cars

A SPECIAL REPORT

The new model waiting to be unwrapped

maintenance costs rather than tie up capital in depreciating assets, i.e. new cars.

As one could expect in such an important sector it is the subject of more real and imaginary "expertise for sale" than almost any other aspect of business and industrial life in this country. Statistics abound and if you buy enough they will tell you what you want to hear.

But the one statistic that crops up time after time and never ceases to impress is the value of the fleet and company market. It is variously estimated at between £7,000m and £8,000m a year and that alone explains why every car maker of note selling in this country maintains an expensive fleet sales department and why the importers are making such strenuous efforts to get their share of the cake which until quite recently was thought to be an exclusively British perk.

Mrs Jean Denton, managing director of Herondrive, one of the pace-setters in the company car package deal business, says that in an era when management responsibility and autonomy are coming to the fore, it is difficult and wrong to tell a man what he should have down to the last detail. This trend is leading to company car users being allowed a wide choice within the parameters laid down by the chief executive. She calls it "putting the perk back in the car park".

Motor industry watchers are agreed that there will be a reaction this year to 1983's new car sales bonanza which saw a record 1.7 million cars sold in Britain. But while they expect the market to fall to around 1.7 million some observers insist that fleet and company car sales will "buck" the trend and increase.

It seems that 1983 was the year of the private buyer and it was this retail led boom which is expected to tail off somewhat this year. Ford, the long established market leader in the company car business, confidently expects the fleet sector will increase by 4 per cent.

Mr Ernie Thompson, Ford's director of sales says: "A lot of vehicle replacement has been postponed, a lot of leasing contracts have been extended and there is a degree of pent-up demand. This will fuel an increased fleet market".

A 4 per cent increase is good news at any time but when it relates to the uniquely important British fleet and company market it is especially good. Britain is the only country in the world where company bought cars account for over 60 per cent of all the cars sold.

Fleet News, the leading trade paper serving this very specialised sector, undertook a survey of readers with responsibility for 3.5 million cars and came up with some very significant information which further emphasises the importance of the sector to car manufacturers, their dealers and the increasing number of contract hire, leasing and consultancy firms.

It found that 41 per cent of companies replace their cars every two years, 40 per cent every three and 12 per cent every four. The surprise was the number favouring three years instead of the more generally established practice of two yearly intervals. Such is the pressure on firms' finances at present that they are apparently prepared to accept additional

The demise of the Cortina, the advent of the trendy Sierra, the introduction of Vauxhall's extremely successful Cavalier and a host of new offerings from the importers produced with an eye to the needs of the company buyer, all place the emphasis on driver choice. The spin-off for the firm is a happier employee and possibly lower maintenance costs because of the extra pride and care with his preferred new car.

With few exceptions manufacturers run demonstration fleets for the company car buyer to borrow. He is offered cars for anything from a few days to several months for an extended test of reliability. In a year which has seen the fiercest price war in living memory many demonstrators have also been used to sweeten the pot and clinch a deal.

The tougher income tax penalties introduced for company cars above 1800cc has seen firms rush through a hurried modification of an existing model. In BMW's case



One man and his cars: John Pugh, Vauxhall fleet sales manager

it now offers the BMW 318i especially tailored for the executive who previously bought the 2 litre six cylinder BMW 320i but resented having to pay the extra tax. The 1766cc BMW 318i is the answer.

Vauxhall has also been able to cash in on the same tax problem with up-market versions of the Cavalier and the larger bodied Carlton with engines just scraping under the 1800cc limit.

One of the less publicised but still important attractions of the fleet market for the manufacturer is that the fleet operator is less inclined to join the rush for August new model year registration than the private buyer. The professional buyer knows only too well that PDI's (Pre-delivery inspections) tend to be skimmed as workshops are swamped by the flood of August orders. They are much more concerned with the mileage their cars will do and the effect on resale prices than the prefix on their registration plates.

All manufacturers offer special

deals to fleet buyers. Until recently it was generally assumed these were only available to what the trade calls Registered Fleet Operators (RFO's). That is those with fleets of 25 or more vehicles. Transport managers are given VIP treatment with frequent invitations to new car launches and technical presentations. They are even consulted at an early stage in the development of new models and certainly when new designs are put to the test of public acceptability in secretly held clinics.

In the past 18 months, however, as many of the smaller importers have sought to rectify their exclusion from the lucrative fleet market the 25 minimum has been scrapped. Indeed with some of the importer's dealers standing to benefit by a factory bonus of

several hundred pounds for every company car sold in this way, the more cynical fleet operators are now talking of RFO's with a fleet of less than half a dozen.

The future is very much in the melting pot at present. The Day of The Cortina is over and most knowledgeable observers believe it will never return. As one major fleet operator put it: "Ford's total dominance of the fleet market rested solidly on the broad shoulders of the Cortina at a time when its competitors were not in the same street. Those days are gone. Every manufacturer of any size selling in Britain today is in there pitching for business with fast improving cars".

The transport director of a Midland engineering group with 75 cars in his fleet said: "In the future you will find that more and more fleets contain a wider selection of cars particularly for middle management. In our case we were worried about complicating maintenance work by introducing more makes to what had been essentially a

single manufacturer fleet supplemented by a few expensive cars of different makes for board members.

"Today we have three makes in the main fleet and that will increase to five in a couple of months. So many modern cars are now reliable enough to be operated throughout their short fleet life without undue maintenance expenses".

Clifford Webb
Motoring Correspondent



The shape of things to come: Austin-Rover's LM11, to be called the Montego

The battle between the market leader Ford and fast improving Vauxhall for the lion's share of the fleet market for medium cars - represented by their Sierra and Cavalier models - is one of the most bitter confrontations we in Britain have seen for a long time. "Those two are not taking many prisoners and that means give away prices, follow up services and five star attention", was how the fleet sales manager of a rival manufacturer put it.

It is not difficult to see why the two American groups are concentrating so much of their time and resources on this one sector. Medium cars account for some 60 per cent of all cars sold in Britain and more than half are bought by companies or professional men and women. That means 500,000 cars a year on the basis of last year's 1.79 million new car registrations.

In truth, however, the medium sector is tending to divide itself into lower and upper groupings with cars like the Escort and Astra in the lower bracket, Austin Rover's Maestro, now approaching its first birthday, has tried to keep a foot in both camps because it is a little longer than Escort and offers more interior space.

Maestro has made promising inroads into fleet business but if Austin Rover is to improve on its 18.5 per cent market share it must do a great deal better. For far too long it has not had suitable models for this very demanding sector. Maestro was a start but it does not compete head on with Sierra or Cavalier. LM11 will rectify that in April.

Ever since Maestro was launched the industry's grape vine has been full of rumours about LM 11. It was said to be a bootied version of the hatchback

Maestro but reports to that effect caused tempers to rise at Austin Rover's Coventry headquarters. Company sources insisted that LM 11, soon to be called Montego, only bears a family likeness to Maestro and is in fact much larger. Unofficial photographs seem to support this.

Brian Mahony, Austin Rover's UK sales director, says: "LM 11 is probably the most vital ingredient in the company's recovery plans. It is pitched directly at Cavalier and Sierra. More and more we are taking the views of fleet operators into our new product designs. Those who have seen preproduction models have been impressed".

The importance of LM 11 is underlined by the changes that have been made in the company's fleet sales department to prepare for its arrival. In the past year another 50 fleet sales staff have been recruited and reorganised into three divisions under Jeffery Johnson, the fleet sales director.

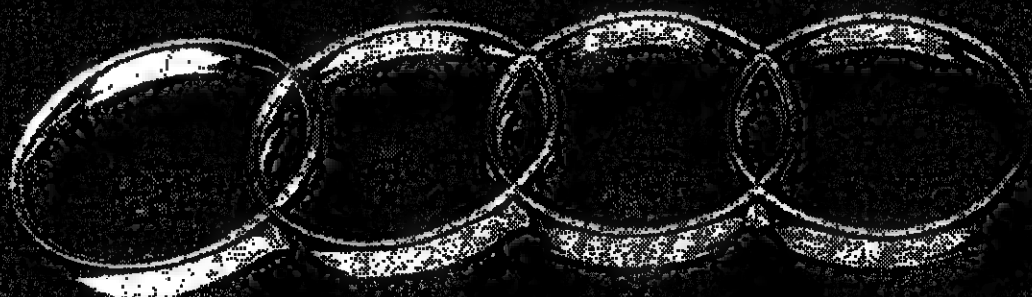
For the first time private and public sector fleet sales have their own sales team. Both are backed by an entirely new departure for a BL company - a "Think Tank" to look after long term fleet strategy and sales developments. It will be seen by down to earth fleet operators, who over the years have been very critical of BL's lack of attention to fleet needs, as clear evidence of its determination to break with the bad old days.

Vauxhall is the new blue eyed boy in the fleet business. In September 1981 when the front wheel drive Cavalier was launched the General Motors company held a little over 8 per cent of the fleet market. At the end of last year it was claiming 16.5 per cent and within the crucial medium sector was holding a remarkable 25 to 30 per cent.

John Pugh, Vauxhall's fleet sales manager, is quite insistent that there has never been anything approaching Cavalier's impact on fleet buyers. "They are a notoriously conservative bunch where new cars are concerned preferring to sit back and let someone else iron out the bugs. That did not happen with Cavalier. Right from the start they took to it

continued on page 23

Status symbols.



Cars that are valued above their price.

VAG

COMPANY CARS

From Austin to Volvo: Peter Waymark looks at the cars that count in the drive for sales

The never-ending battle for rich fleet pickings

This time last year BL had just launched the Austin Maestro and motor industry watchers wondered whether the Ford Escort's seemingly perennial domination of the light-medium car sector might at last be threatened.

The Maestro was BL's first convincing entrant in this part of the market for decades, a car to banish the unhappy memory of the Allegro and make a strong appeal to fleet buyers. All the right elements were there - servicing costs and a design based on tried and tested components. The engines were comprehensively revised versions of units that had seen service in several other BL models, while the gearbox was bought in from Volkswagen. Robot assembly augured well for the quality of the car and like the Metro, the Maestro

Maestro's defence, it must be said that the car did not go on sale until nearly two months into the year; that if five-door versions only are counted, it matched the Escort almost car for car; and it did have the satisfaction of displacing the Vauxhall Astra as number two in the sector.

The last was no mean achievement, for the Astra, true to its German origins, was an excellent vehicle, sturdily built and with superb handling, and like the Escort it was already well established in the market. A new version of the Astra is due in the autumn.

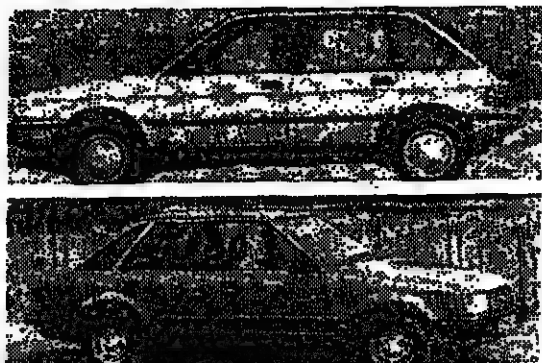
These three are battling it out in the small/medium car sector with the others a long way behind. Unhappily for Talbot, the Horizon is one of the also-rans, once voted Car of the Year, and strong on performance and economy, it has failed

SMALL/MEDIUM CLASS

	Ford Escort 1.3L 5 door	Austin Maestro 1.3L 5 door	Vauxhall Astra 1.3L 5 door	Talbot Horizon 1.3LS 5 door
price	£5,421	£5,199	£5,286	£4,895
engine size (cc)	1,295	1,275	1,297	1,294
consumption (mpg):				
urban	30.4	37.0	32.5	36.2
56 mph	47.1	52.5	51.4	48.7
75 mph	36.7	37.8	36.2	37.2
front wing	£42.43	£30.00	£36.15	£41.50
clutch unit	£48.42	£52.50	£42.65	£49.73
major service	1hr 42mins	2hrs 6mins	1hr 12mins	1hr 55mins
insurance group	3	3	3	3

MEDIUM CLASS

	Ford Sierra 1.6L 4 door/5 speed	Vauxhall Cavalier 1.6L 4 door/4 speed	Austin Montego 4 door	Talbot Solara 1.6GL 4 door/5 speed	Renault 18GTL 4 door/5 speed
price	£6,221	£5,882	?	£5,145	£5,950
engine size (cc)	1,593	1,598	?	1,592	1,647
consumption (mpg):					
urban	28.0	29.4	?	28.8	32.5
56 mph	44.8	46.3	?	50.4	57.7
75 mph	34.9	35.2	?	37.2	42.2
front wing	£44.66	£47.50	?	£46.25	£41.28
clutch unit	£47.03	£46.80	?	£78.80	£54.59
major service	2hrs 24mins	1hr 12mins	?	1hr 55mins	2hrs 30mins
insurance group	3	3	?	3	4



Top: the Austin Maestro and Ford's Escort

promised to be - indeed had to be - right first time.

The Escort, though, was a formidable competitor. Its biggest advantage was getting into the field first and once initial doubts about front-wheel drive and the hatchback bodystyle - both traditionally anathema to fleet managers - had been overcome, the car simply took over where the old Escort had left off.

So far the Escort has come through the challenge of the Maestro unscathed. In last year's record British car market, the Escort was not only the top model but outsold the Maestro by nearly three to one. In the

to sell in Britain in any numbers and Talbot must already be looking to the replacement due next year.

The superminis, too, are significant fleet vehicles, for driving schools, car hire firms, television rental companies and the like. BL's Metro is established as the class leader, though the Fiesta will hope to do better after a face-lift in the autumn which produced a 20 per cent saving of fuel.

Vauxhall's Spanish-built Nova, which has the advantage of being offered in both saloon and hatchback forms, is also starting to build a useful fleet business.

The Cavalier treatment

The medium car sector, which contains the richest fleet pickings, is witnessing a fierce battle for sales between the Vauxhall Cavalier and Ford's Cortina replacement, the Sierra. If the Sierra has generally been ahead, Ford does not rule this part of the market to the extent it did throughout the 1970s.

The Cavalier came in with two advantages. First, it was an excellent car, building on the reputation of the previous Cavalier for quality and reliability (not always Vauxhall's greatest assets in the past) and

offering a good blend of performance, handling and fuel economy.

Secondly, it arrived on the market just a year before Ford replaced the Cortina and in the uncertainty about how the Sierra would turn out, fleet managers decided to give Vauxhall a try. Many of them liked the Cavalier and stayed with it.

The Sierra proved a controversial design. The car tried to do two things at once: revive Ford's flagging mid-range sales on the Continent and prove an acceptable successor to the Cortina. It offered a striking hatchback bodystyle and independent rear suspension to European motorists but had the reassurance of rear-wheel drive and proven engines for the more conservative British fleet customer.

During 1983, nudged along by heavy discounting, the Sierra outsold the Cavalier by 159,000 to 127,500; last month the Cavalier edged ahead and in doing so helped General Motors

for the first time to take a bigger market share than BL. For BL, though, the riposte is not far away: in April it launches a Sierra/Cavalier challenger in the Austin Montego (LM 11).

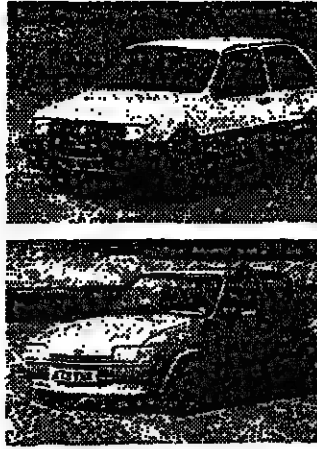
BL's biggest weakness in the last few years has been the lack of a strong contender in the medium sector for neither the Morris Marina, nor the Ambassador (formerly the Princess) has really filled the bill. The Montego will replace both and more than the Metro or Maestro it could be BL's make or break model.

It is expected to have a similar mechanical specification to that of the Maestro, but there may be a wider choice of engines with a two litre as well as a 1300 and 1600. It will be a longer car, with four doors and a conventional boot instead of a tailgate, and there is also likely to be an estate version.

Reflecting the fortunes of the company as a whole, the Talbot Solara has sold disappointingly and rather beneath its deserts. It is attractively styled, rides well and is sparing on fuel. Foreign makes have been making a determined effort to break into this sector with one or two, such as the Renault 18, having modest success.

SUPERMINI CLASS

	Ford Fiesta 850L 3 door	Austin Metro 1.0L 3 door
price	£4,491	£4,269
engine size (cc)	957	998
consumption (mpg):		
urban	40.4	41.7
56 mph	54.3	56.3
75 mph	39.8	39.5
front wing	£44.12	£29.00
clutch unit	£37.77	£80.00
major service	2hrs 12mins	2hrs 45mins
insurance group	1	1



The Metro and Fiesta

New names on the way to tempt executives

In the executive car sector, roughly defined as vehicles of between two and three litres capacity, we are talking less about fleets and more about purchases for and by directors, managers and professional people. Individual choice is a bigger factor than it is lower down the market and the "buy British" requirement is often waived.

As a result, almost any executive model is a potential company car and the competition is therefore greater than anywhere else. While in the medium sector the Sierra and Cavalier have effectively carved up the market between them, there are up to a dozen strong contenders for executive sales.

The three leaders are the Ford Granada, the Rover and the big Volvos. All three, as it happens, are at the veteran stage, and it is no secret that a Granada replacement, code-named Scorpio, is coming out later in the year. And in 1985 BL will be launching its new executive car, the product of the XX project with Honda.

The Granada, meanwhile, is a car that has benefited from a series of improvements over the years, notably in the areas of suspension and refinement; the

top of the range Ghia models can boast almost luxury standards of trim and equipment; and, as on all Fords.

The Rover has had a chequered history, voted Car of the Year when it first appeared but badly let down by mechanical and quality problems. Nor did Rover traditionalists take to its striking shape and hatchback body. But the range has been steadily broadened and improved and now runs from an economical two litre to a turbo diesel and the high performance Vitesse.

Volvo has maintained a strong challenge in the British executive market, despite models that are hardly pretty to look at and, in the case of the 240 series, go back to the late 1960s. But they are valued by British motorists for their durability. The bizarrely styled 760, available with either petrol

or turbodiesel engines, is a relative newcomer at the top of the range.

General Motors is doing well in this sector with the Carlton, while its Opel Senator is a car of almost Mercedes quality. Mercedes itself now has two entrants, the "compact" 200 range, and the recently introduced and smaller 190. Another distinguished contender from Germany is the Audi 100, with its low-drag shape and unusual five cylinder engine.

Saab, like Volvo, carries on with a basically old design that scores on durability, while there is much new technology in the BMW 3 and 5 series. French models in this part of the market include the ageing but still stylish Citroen CX, the refined 505 and 604 from Peugeot and the brand-new Renault 25, which replaces the 20 and 30 models.



The Volvo: a strong challenge in the executive market

EXECUTIVE CLASS

	Ford Granada 2.8i	Rover 2600SE	Opel Senator 3.0E	Volvo 760GLE	Audi 100CD
price	£11,734	£11,449	£12,896	£13,249	£10,825
engine size (cc)	2,792	2,597	2,968	2,849	2,144
consumption (mpg):					
urban	19.0	19.0	18.6	17.9	22.6
56 mph	37.7	40.9	31.1	25.0	44.1
75 mph	28.0	31.1	24.5	25.0	38.7
front wing	£78.46	£82.50	£51.50	£57.43	£77.62
clutch unit	£94.20	£85.50	£85.05	-	£117.36
major service	2hrs 48mins	2hrs 30mins	1hr 12mins	3hrs 6mins	1hr 36mins
insurance group	7	6	7	7	7

* automatic transmission

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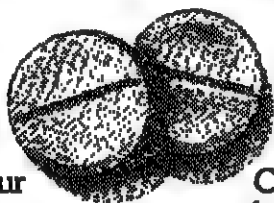
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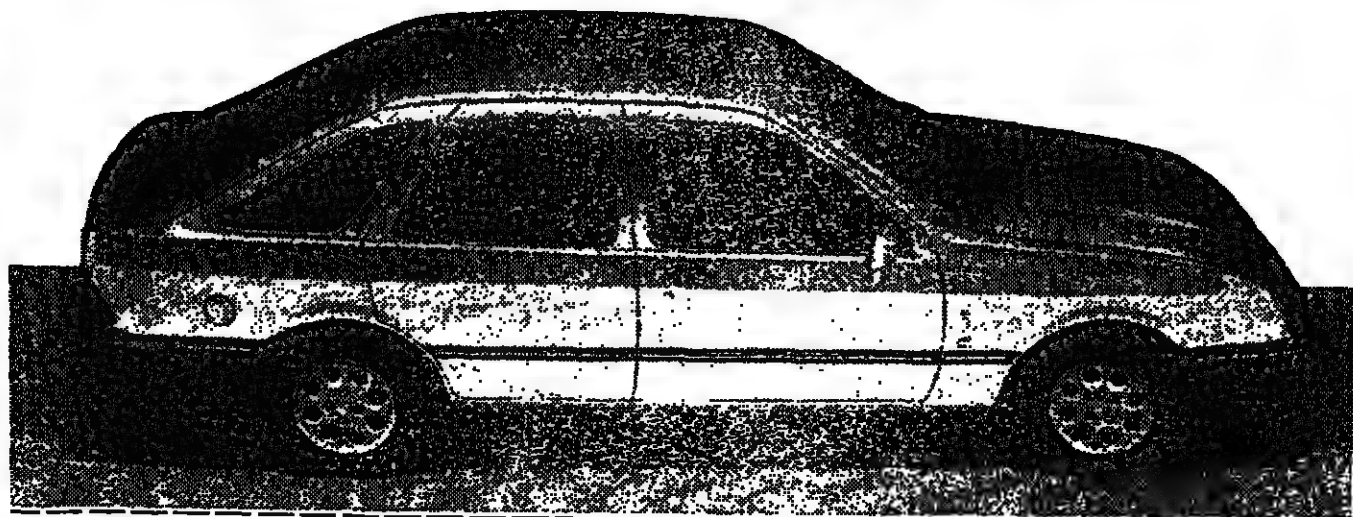
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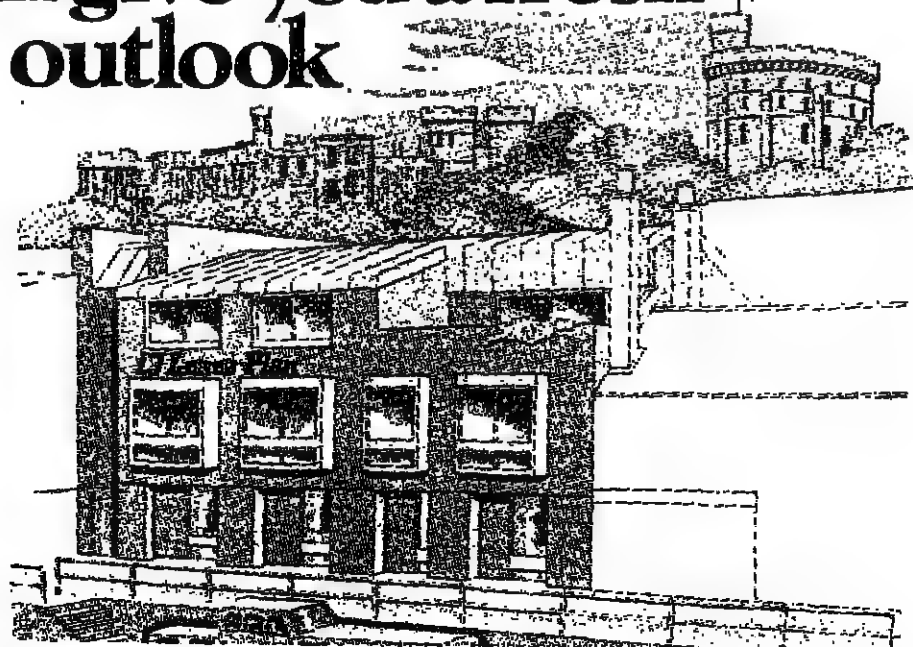


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COMPANY CARS

A remarkable turn around for Jaguar

Paying the price of sheer luxury

The fortunes of Britain's two main luxury car manufacturers could hardly be more different than they were barely five years ago. At that time Rolls-Royce, having come through the energy crisis almost unscathed, was enjoying record sales; while Jaguar was losing money heavily and its very existence was in doubt.

Today, Rolls-Royce is still trying to recover from the disastrous year of 1982 when sales fell by one quarter and the company called for large redundancies at the Crewe factory. It can no longer count, as it could throughout the 1970s, on being immune from the harsh realities of the economy in general and the car market in particular.

By any logical standard, the Rolls-Royce is a thoroughly anachronistic car, absurdly large for crowded city streets and one of the worst models in the world for fuel consumption. For a long time these things hardly mattered: the car had a unique reputation for quality and there was nothing else quite like it.

The current saloon, the Silver Spirit, made absolutely no concessions to the economic climate, being actually bigger, and only slightly less thirsty, than the Silver Shadow it replaced. In retrospect this may have been a mistake and there is evidence that some company chairmen feel that at a time of high unemployment it is no longer socially acceptable to ride in such ostentatious transport.

They may also be deciding

LUXURY CLASS

	Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit	Mercedes-Benz 500SEL	Daimler Double Six	BMW 736i SE
price	£55,240	£27,770	£24,991	£24,670
engine size (cc)	6,750	4,973	5,343	3,430
consumption (mpg):				
urban	12.0	18.6	15.0	17.7
56 mph	18.1	31.0	26.8	35.8
75 mph	16.1	24.8	21.5	28.8
front wing	£473.79	£58.45	£169.00	£119.16
clutch unit				
major service	12hrs 50mins	5hrs 25mins	5hrs 50mins	3hrs 25mins
insurance group	9	9	9	9
*automatic transmission				



The Jaguar, a new generation of cars

that there is an adequate alternative in the S class Mercedes, a car that matches the Rolls on engineering and finish and sells at half the price. Mercedes launched the current model as an exercise in "making the big car respectable", especially in fuel economy; since then there have been further dramatic improvements in that area. Superbly built and discreetly styled, the S class does not parade its luxury; but luxurious it certainly is.

The remarkable turn around in Jaguar's sales has been largely due to a determined attack on those areas like productivity, quality and reliability that had so let it down in the past. In 1981 the company made only 14,000 cars with 10,000 workers; this year's likely total is 32,000 cars with 8,200 workers.

Even through the bad times there was never any question that the cars, as cars, especially in their 12 cylinder versions,

offered a combination of performance and refinement that was unequalled anywhere in the world. Now Jaguar is on the threshold of a new generation of cars, the XJ-40 range, that must both maintain the tradition and also move with the times. The new lightweight 3.6 litre engine, introduced in the XJ-S, seems a good omen.

Without being quite as robust as the Mercedes or as refined as the Jaguar, the big BMW models, the 7 series saloons and the 6 series coupes, have sold consistently well in Britain and offer comfort, lively performance and excellent handling. They also boast several advanced technical features, such as the impressive anti-lock braking system (ABS) which is standard on the top models.

Peter Waymark

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Will we learn to love derv?

In recent years, the diesel-engined car has lost its image of gimmickry and won a respectable place in British market, thanks largely to rapid strides in technology and better availability.

Today's diesel cars are clean, quiet, smooth and easy to start and provide a pleasant surprise for those who still harbour the out-of-date suspicion that driving one on equivalent to sitting in the cab of a noisy and smelly lorry.

Diesel cars are now on offer in Britain in various shapes and sizes. Motor magazine lists 42 of which almost half are produced by Ford and Peugeot, each of them now offering nine diesel models.

Fourteen manufacturers now market diesel engined versions of popular models on the British market, but despite significant sales increases the diesel remains a relative rarity.

In the company car sector, it is clearly not a major winner and is unlikely ever to achieve the penetration won by diesels in the rest of land-locked Europe, where taxi demand, for example, is much higher.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders predicted, rightly, that demand for diesels would rise in line with availability. The increase in the number of models equipped with a diesel engine had proved the point.

In 1980, diesel cars accounted for 0.4 per cent of total new car sales. Last year the proportion was 1.37 per cent. Between 1982 and 1983 diesel car sales almost doubled to 24,600 and it would appear, won for themselves a growing and permanent share.

But the volume of diesel car sales remains low in relation to other European markets. In 1982, Britain's figure of 14,530 diesel car sales compared with 117,178 in West Germany, 221,309 in France, 293,000 in Italy and 37,203 in the Netherlands.

One reason for Britain's comparative lack of interest in diesels is geographical. In an island nation the sales rep's car is unlikely to cover the huge distances - well over 20,000 miles a year - that are necessary before the diesel becomes an economic alternative to the cheaper petrol engine.

Secondly, the differential in the price of derv and petrol has only been established in Britain in recent years and has been notoriously small compared

with the rest of Europe. Today, derv is about 1.64p per gallon against 180p for four-star petrol.

Once off the main highways in Britain, drivers will have difficulty locating a garage selling derv: self-service stations often site the derv pump away from the main service area so that lorries can manoeuvre more easily, and are likely to be open to the elements. Derv is also a smelly, dirty fuel: splashed shoes probably are ruined.

Tax on derv is now 47 per cent of the retail price in the UK, compared with 53 per cent for petrol. In Italy, the tax differential is a huge 41 per cent in favour of derv, which attracts only 17 per cent tax on the selling price. In France, the gap is 10 per cent but in West Germany, the differential is the smallest, just three per cent.

Last year, Ford completed a £100m investment to re-equip its engine plant at Dagenham in east London to manufacture its first diesel engine for cars. The plan is to supply engines to the entire Ford of Europe empire. Potential capacity is 400,000 units a year.

The Dagenham operation compliments the company's petrol engine factory at Bridgend in Wales and means that most of Ford's power units for its European cars are British-made.

About £40m has been spent developing Ford's new 1.6 litre diesel which this spring will be fitted to the Fiesta, Orion and Escort, the latter two being contenders at the bottom end of the fleet market.

The engine is a direct competitor to the 1.6 litre Vauxhall unit which is proving so successful in the Cavalier and Astra.

The Fiesta diesel, which the company claims will be the most economical car in Europe, will return 74.3 mpg at 56 mph, while the figure for the successful Japanese diesel mini, the Daihatsu Charade, is 78.47 mpg.

As a result of the increased activity in diesel cars there are some forecasters who now believe that by the end of this decade, 10 per cent of all cars produced will be diesel. However, with strenuous efforts being made to improve even further the efficiency of the petrol engine such predictions must be viewed with more than a little circumspection.

Edward Townsend

The new model to come

Continued from page 21

and they have been buying it in increasing numbers ever since.

But even that remarkable start is nothing compared with the spin-offs. Cavalier drew the attention of fleet buyers to the rest of Vauxhall's rejuvenated range of models and Astra in particular.

"At the lower end we are giving full support to Nova which is now coming into freer supply and in the bigger car market the Carlton is a success story and a half with sales up from 4,000 in 1982 to 20,000 last year. It is a very fully equipped de luxe saloon which comes in below the 1800cc income tax ceiling and that makes it a very attractive package."

Ford is acutely aware of the increased competition already in the field and the extra pressure that will be created by LM 11. "As the market leader for a long time we appreciate more than anyone else that our competitors can only make progress at our expense and there is no way we are going to take that lying down. We shall

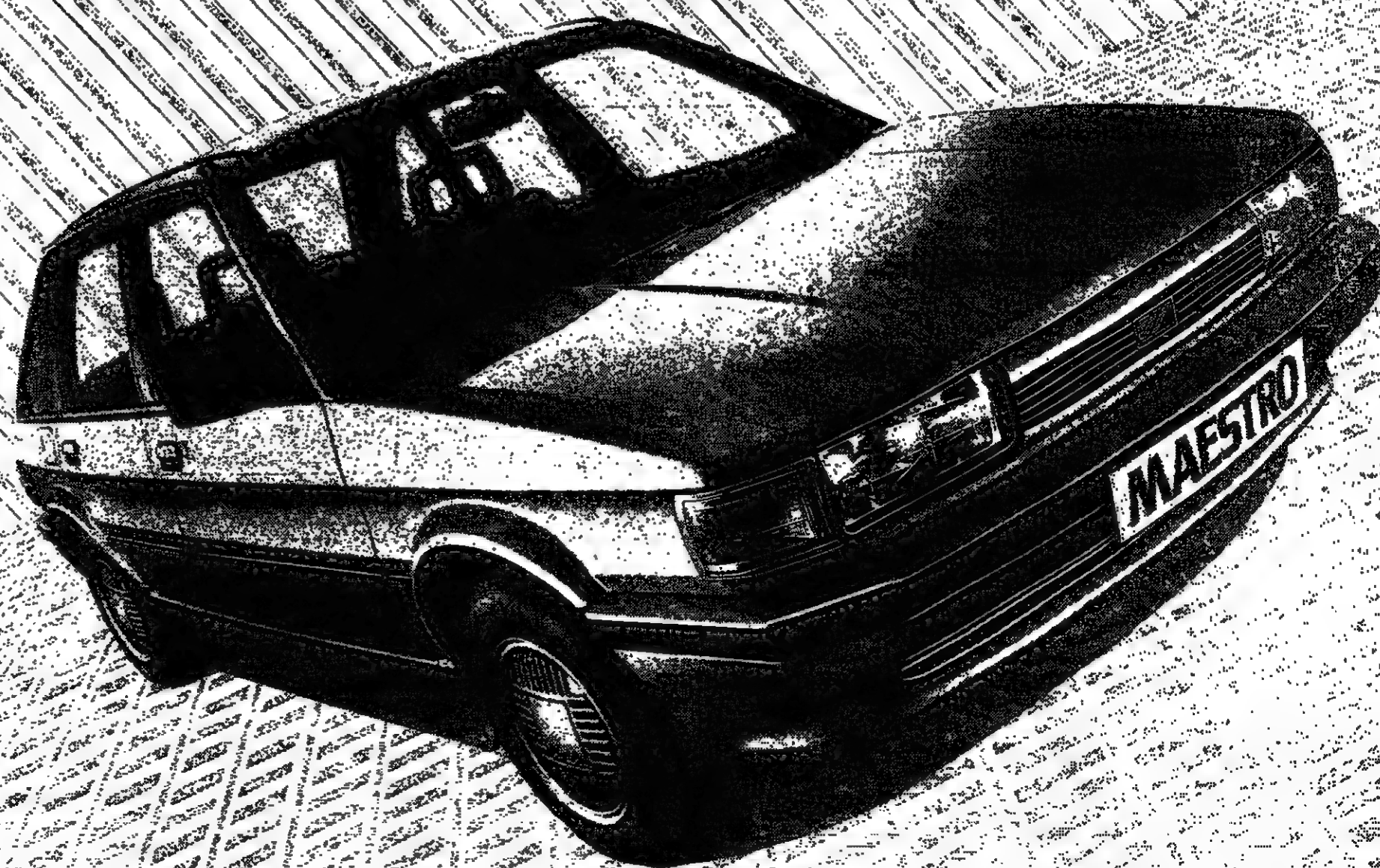
increase our efforts even further," was how a company spokesman summed it up.

Commenting on latest trends in the fleet and business car sector, Tony Semper, Ford's fleet development manager, said: "The true cost of running a fleet of company cars is more apparent than ever now because inflation has been reduced so significantly. As a consequence the growth of specialist fleet management companies has slowed up. They are still widely used however for their leasing expertise by the middle sized companies who do not have the resources to support their own in-house fleet administration department."

On the choice of cars he said the medium or C/D sector was for shrinking and been doing so for the past three years. Downsizing the past three years, cars to smaller, less expensive cars was a contributory factor as companies were forced to reduce transport costs. Another important influence was the personal income tax penalty applying to bigger cars.

C.W.

AUSTIN ROVER

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Model shown: 1.6 HLE at £5,871 with optional alloy wheels at extra cost.

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Best News cost of ownership tables are for Maestro 1.3 L. All models except AMG 1500. © Crown Copyright reserved. First manual models only. A.D.C. figures, Maestro 1.3 HLE Simulated Urban Cycle 43.0 mpg, 6.1 L per 100 km, Constant 56 mph 60.5 mpg, 4.7 L per 100 km, Constant 75 mph 41.5 mpg, 6.1 L per 100 km. Price quoted is for the Maestro 1.3, correct at time of going to press, excluding number plates and delivery.

COMPANY CARS

Once it was patriotic to Buy British, now ...

Foreign comes into the open

The dividing line between a British car and an imported make was once very obvious. Today it is so blurred that companies who only a few years ago felt it their patriotic duty to Buy British can now save their conscience by opting for Ford, Vauxhalls or Talbots which may or may not have been built in British factories.

In fact they could just as easily have come from Germany, Spain and Belgium. Even those assembled in Britain contain a large number of foreign parts such as the Australian engines fitted to all Vauxhall Cavaliers.

This blurring of the dividing line has persuaded an increasing number of companies that they will no longer invite public censure if they go the whole hog and buy a car that is instantly recognisable as a foreigner. A barometer of the increasing acceptability of imported cars is the fact they can now be seen in the car parks of Midland based component manufacturers who once banished them to surrounding streets.

However, distasteful it may seem to the more nationalist-

cally minded the fact remains that some cars have a more emotional appeal to drivers than others and these include a number of Continental marques. The appeal of Mercedes and BMW to senior executives is long established in this market. What is comparatively new, however, is the way the two German makes have extended their range down market to attract the younger budget conscious middle manager.

The new "small" Mercedes 190 costs around £10,000 and is no cheaper than the bigger bodied Mercedes 200. But again it is a question of perceived image. The smaller 190 is a bold attempt by Mercedes to break into a sector of the market where the tax image of the bigger 200 makes it unacceptable.

BMW goes even further down market with cars in the £7,000 to £8,000 bracket which offers a very attractive alternative to mass produced Fords and Vauxhalls. This was recently spotlighted when Bygging, the UK subsidiary of the Swiss company Waxoyl, ordered £250,000 worth of 3-

series BMW's to replace a mixed Ford and Vauxhall fleet. Even the company's sales reps will now use a BMW.

But it is not only the established names in the Continental executive car business who have set their stall out in the British company car market. Even such unlikely names as Alfa Romeo, the state-owned Italian group more usually associated with fast sports saloons, is now making a determined effort to attract company business.

A few months ago it flew a plane load of fleet buyers to Naples to try to persuade them that its much troubled Pomigliano plant has turned over a new leaf and is now producing the new Alfa 33 which is reliable enough to join company fleets. Alfa has always had an extremely marketable name but in recent years it has been marred by more than its share of rust and reliability problems. However the latest offerings from the plant in the shadow of Vesuvius have shown considerable improvement.

Another famous Italian name in a similar position is Lancia.

It too was hit by rust and reliability problems and its image has not been helped by becoming part of the huge Fiat empire. However last April Lancia sales in Britain were separated from Fiat Auto (UK) and taken over by Lancia, a newly created subsidiary of Gerald Ronson's Heron Corporation.

Under managing director John Turner Lancia made the courageous decision to face up to Lancia's damaged reputation and not try to sweep it under the carpet.

This approach almost certainly accounts for the slow start. Lancia sales director Mike Carida says they will probably sell about 1,500 cars less than Fiat in their first full year but is planning a substantial improvement this year which would nearly double sales to around 6,000.

The Japanese have made little progress in the fleet and company car sector but the fact remains that they have not really tried. At least not quite recently when for the first time since it was introduced the so called voluntary ceiling of around 11 per cent of the market was only reached with the aid of some pretty fierce discounting. Faced with the need for a hard sell approach the Japanese are changing their tactics and adopting more aggressive sales techniques to win business with fleet operators.

Alan Marsh, sales and marketing director of Toyota GB, believes the way-in is on the back of a financial package offering very favourable contract hire and leasing programmes - a method finding increasing favour with all the



Tony Semper, Ford's fleet development manager, with the Sierra (left) and the Escort

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The big financial question:
Is it really best to buy?

In the early 1970s almost all fleet and company car deals involved outright purchase. Since then however changes in income tax and the need to conserve capital have seen a tremendous growth in leasing, contract hire and fleet management.

Despite this change which has spawned a whole new service industry, the majority of company cars are still bought outright. Some suppliers, especially retail dealers, discourage leasing contracts and many fleet operators prefer the freedom to take advantage of the flood of cut price offers coming their way at the moment.

Another deciding factor is the level of interest rates. It has been a long time since capital borrowing was cheap but it is nice to think that if the good times return you are free to take advantage and not tied into long term contracts.

There are also a number of prejudices against leasing contracts by transport managers who feel that their role in the company structure is being threatened by an outside organisation professing to do the work better than them. But the fact remains that in the very sophisticated and competitive

American market about 70 per cent of fleet business is conducted in the form of leasing contracts.

It seems that long ago our American cousins realised that the motor trade is a risk business and decided that additional long term costs were worth accepting to underwrite this risk.

The chief executive of one of the largest contract hire companies told me: "More and more companies are seeing their motorising as fixed costs and using their variables to generate revenue and profit".

The whole cost of leasing, up to £8,000 a car, is tax allowable. This contrasts with restricted allowances for outright purchase: 25 per cent of the purchase price in the first year and 25 per cent of the written down value in subsequent years. The maximum allowance in this way is only £2,000 and that makes the purchase of the chairman's Mercedes or Jag an expensive proposition.

The simplest form of lease sees the leasing company buying the car and being paid a monthly rental. But the more popular method is the so called "balloon lease" which involves lower rental payments plus a final or "balloon" payment to

make good any difference between the actual second hand value of the car and the original estimate.

This involves the lessee in some risk which is entirely avoided by contract hire but as you would expect is more expensive. The rent is calculated on the basis of estimate mileage over the hire period and there is usually a "get out clause" which permits the hire company to make an additional charge at the end if the vehicle is returned with more miles on the clock or in a very poor condition.

But this method lends itself to a complete package deal which can cover insurance, road tax and even the provision of replacements. In this way it permits firms to budget more tightly and even cut down on transport staffing.

The fleet management contract is the ultimate way of handing over administration to a specialist while retaining tight budgetary control. Dial-Contracts claims to be the market leader in company car leasing, contract hire and fleet management with a current operating fleet valued at £75m serving 500 industrial and commercial customers.

Interleasing, Birmingham, the Hanger Motors company, is probably the biggest in the contract hire business with 12,000 vehicles. Another offshoot of a Birmingham based motor group is Autolease, the BSG company.

Herodrive London, part of Gerald Ronson's empire and run by Jean Denton, one of the brightest executives in a very tough and hitherto "Male Only" business, says: "Companies must either be prepared to employ experienced car managers and support them or they must rely on outside services. It is this simple choice, combined with the ever growing population of company cars that has encouraged the emergence of a range of specialist services that could save British industry a significant proportion of the huge sums it spends on cars today."

Jack Carrie, chairman of Godfrey Davis (Contract Hire), forecasts that contract hire business will grow by 15 per cent this year and that his own group will comfortably exceed that. He admits his company is "not the cheapest in the market" but insists that this is more than compensated for by first rate service and back-up.

PHH Fleet Management Services of Swindon lays claim to being the fastest growing fleet management company in the UK. In addition to the normal services it also offers two additional ones. The PHH Fleetcard and All Star Fuel Card. The former is a nationally operated charge card for repairs, servicing and maintenance work while the latter gives a similar service for fuel needs.

Last summer Austin Rover decided to go into the contract hire business with its own company British Car Contracts. The plan was to exploit the smaller fleets with up to 25 cars. But when the bigger fleets started taking an interest it became apparent that the state owned car firm was offering very competitive terms. More than 600 contracts had been signed before the end of the year and as BCC's scheme is still only a pilot operation through 60 of Austin Rover's 1,400 dealers, that is a very impressive start indeed.

C.W.

In-car phones, at a price

"One day everyone will have a number, perhaps more important than their name, with which it will be possible to contact them anywhere in the world," according to Dave Halliday of Motorola. Such an Orwellian possibility will actually start becoming reality in 1985.

Cellular Radio is the technology which will make portable telephones, and hence their owners numbers, more accessible. But starting next March, first London, then Birmingham and Manchester and finally the motorways connecting them will be the frontiers of this new world.

Mr Halliday, manager of Cellular Radio operations for Motorola, explained how that symbol of executive luxury, the car telephone, "will remain at about the same price as today for the first few years." In other words, about the same £2,500 for a mobile handset alone with another £500 each year to work on the present British Telecom System 4 radiophone network.

The leading car phone suppliers hope that the two Cellular Radio services will attract so many new customers that they can make standard units in volume, allowing prices to tumble and their functionality to grow in much the same way as the personal microcomputer market.

Only recent advances in fast, computerized exchanges together with radio phones that can be rapidly re-tuned by a computer have allowed the old idea of "cellular" radio, and hence car phones, to become both practical and, perhaps one day, affordable.

Both of the British networks will be based on the same Advanced Mobile Phone System (sold as AMPS) invented by AT&T's Bell Laboratories. For the first time direct dial-up both to and from a mobile radio phone over the Public Switched Telephone Network (or PSTN) will be possible.

Typically, when the user keys in a number from the mobile radio phone he or she is assigned a voice channel by the nearest "cell" base station. The link might then be routed on through the PSTN or back out across the Cellular Radio network to another mobile radio phone.

The leading suppliers believe that car phones will be most popular, since it is expected to be a business communications system to what one supplier described as "that mobile office". Models are already on the market which combine voice with digitized text and data which can be displayed on an in-car screen - at several thousand pounds the price might still be considered prohibitive to equip the travelling salesman.

Perhaps the ultimate in-car communications system was demonstrated as part of World Communications Year, during 1983. Dubbed the "Communicar", a Rover Maestro Vanden Plas was kitted out with a BT Emerald Radio phone for direct dial-up, a CB Radio and microcomputer player on the dashboard.

An argument is now brewing over the kind of standards that will be enforced on the wide range of existing equipment on sale in the car phone market and just how much is actually known about the useful operation of this latest technology.

And to confuse matters, the radio phone standard for Britain, called the Total Access Communication System (or TACS), is subtly different from the both of the AMPS-type systems which will be installed by the BT-Securicor joint venture and Racal Millicom. The TACS standard is a compromise that attempts to include all desirable facilities.

At issue are the so-called "air interface" standards needed for the inter-working of different radio phones within either of the TACS Cellular Radio networks - these are being set by the consortia themselves, overseen by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Paul Walton

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Why car leasing has been overtaken by contract hire



Remember the excitement about leasing when it first emerged? With gleaming new cars arriving in the car parks after a minuscule down payment? And the promises of profit when your residual value comfortably exceeded the resettlement figure?

Then managements began to realise that the low first payment was only the tip of a financial iceberg.

There were all the other costs to consider. Like breakdowns, which brought a bill for replacement vehicles.

Plus another for repairs if the car was out of guarantee. Then came such inescapable costs as insurance, servicing, new tyres and batteries.

Next, after a couple of years of this, came the unwelcome realisation that hard-driven, high-mileage cars would have a poor residual value. And the company actually had to fork out cash to meet the finance house's settlement figure.

Surely, said the hard-pressed management team, there has to be a better way.

There is. Leasing was last year's solution. Contract hire is today's more sensible, more economical answer. With contract hire all your costs

are known in advance. You pay only a fixed amount each month for the period of the contract. This takes care of everything. And your administration headaches disappear at the same time.

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THE TIMES

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

Financial services in the Budget firing line

The City has finally woken up to an awful truth: a "neutral" Budget need not be boring. Quite the reverse: as we have argued in this column for some weeks, the Chancellor is likely to establish his radical credentials by matching a "savers" package of tax cuts with tax increases designed to level down the tax treatment of financial institutions. This exercise can - and should be - largely self-financing. A quite separate theme of the Budget promises to be a further switch of the taxing emphasis from income to expenditure.

To start with Mr Nigel Lawson's expressed intentions: these are to introduce a Budget which neither increases nor lowers the net burden of taxation. This is what he means by "neutrality". Since the revenue numbers are looking rather better than they did in the autumn, such a Budget implies a lower public sector borrowing requirement, a tighter medium term financial strategy and, with luck, a cut in interest rates on March 13. Within this framework, there will be quite dramatic swings in taxation.

Mr Lawson has his priorities. The Chancellor - and the Prime Minister, with whom he has been spending most of his pre-Budget days - is keen to raise the real level of income tax allowances. To raise these significantly above the rate of inflation would cost him about £1,000m. This can be financed by increases in spending taxes. There is a maximum of £1.8 billion to be raised from advancing VAT on imports - or £900m if the Chancellor chooses to exempt raw materials. He can raise up to £500m by increasing duties on beer and cider, following EEC requests, to bring them into line with taxes on wine.

The real interest of this Budget would then lie in the Chancellor's treatment of savers and financial institutions. In order to placate his own backbenchers there must be not only a cut in the investment income surcharge, or its abolition (which is still pretty cheap), but also a substantial cut in capital taxation. The right wing of the Conservative party is increasingly disgruntled about the Government's inability to reduce public expenditure, and the natural way for Mrs Thatcher to sweeten her disappointed followers is to make real cuts on Capital Gains Tax and Capital Transfer Tax. There is a strong expectation that stamp duty will be cut. On shares, it is a disincentive to personal savings through the equity market; on houses, it is an impediment to mobility.

Supposing that Mr Lawson needed to find up to £1 billion to finance such a

"savers package", where is he training his tax telescope? One must exclude, at this point, all pre-Budget "benefits" (for example: his extra £100m. from the building societies) since these would be used to lower the overall PSBR. We have, however, had warning of one post-Budget change, in the tax treatment of bank interest which could yield in time, £100m or more. Much more, however, is needed. The banks are still in the firing line. In his previous incarnation as a treasury minister, Mr Lawson was the strongest proponent of Sir Geoffrey Howe's levy on bank profits. He doesn't seem to have softened his general attitude though he may be against another one-off impost.

It is the other financial institutions, notably the insurance companies, that should be most alert. The Treasury is clearly planning an extension of the tax system that will include not only banks but all other institutions selling financial services. The insurance companies are obviously the most vulnerable. Abolition of tax relief on life assurance premiums alone would yield the Chancellor up to £700m.

The Chancellor is unlikely to change corporate taxes in a way which would increase industry's tax burden. Although the Confederation of British Industry is unlikely to be granted its expensive wish of a final abolition of the national insurance surcharge, the Chancellor would not want to raise industrial taxation at a time of fragile economic recovery. There are now unjustifiable distortions in the tax treatment of capital allowance and stock relief. If the Chancellor reduced these, he would want to offer a cut in corporation tax as a quid-pro-quo.

Mr Lawson is not a man for one hundred and one small business schemes (though he will have to sort out a few of those left behind by Sir Geoffrey Howe). He is out to make a mark by ironing out the distortions in the tax system, and by evening out the choices for personal savers. However smooth that sounds in theory, it is going to create a hornet's nest in practice. We may not like the tax system as it now exists but it has evolved over many years.

However radical it may seem, a deep cut here, a vigorous thrust there, could cause appalling administrative havoc for the financial services industry and distress and unfairness for many of their customers. As the balance of the economy tilts from manufacturing to services, so should taxation. A Green Paper, more considered action and decent notice would be a small price to pay for getting it right.

A right Royal road

Royal Insurance Britain's leading composite insurers, yesterday gave a much-needed fillip to a sector reeling from a dismal statement on its US businesses by Commercial Union this week. The immediate reason for celebration was the news that Royal's net worth had increased by 76 per cent £1,422 billion over the past two years, as a result of increased investment returns and increasing stock-market prices. Royal's shares were marked up by 20p to 523p. A one-for-four scrip issue to reflect the increase in reserves is icing on the cake.

Stockmarket sentiment was also helped by Royal's promise to lead the way by including a valuation of its fast-growing life business in the next set of accounts to

be printed next month. Mr John Howard, Royal's chief general manager, indicated that the valuation would take into account the fact that 1983 was a freak year for life funds because of the windfall increase in business stemming from the introduction of the MIRAS mortgage interest relief at source, method of making mortgage payments.

He also suggested that there would be time to take into account the detrimental effect of any Budget proposal to scrap tax relief on life premiums.

Royal's commendable initiatives to reward shareholders and put a value on its life business reflects unease among the composites about their vulnerability to a takeover.

BP to create 7,000 jobs with £1.3bn N Sea investment

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

BP, which will announce record profits in two weeks' time, is to go ahead with a massive investment in the southern North Sea worth £1.3 billion, creating 7,000 new jobs in Britain's offshore oil industry.

The four new fields to be developed will produce natural gas for the British Gas Corporation and a new terminal to handle the supplies will be built on the north banks of the Humber. Contracts for sale of the gas are still being negotiated.

BP's board of directors, which is headed by Sir Peter Walters, yesterday approved the investment and talks will start soon with the Department of Energy for development approval to be granted for the fields.

BP has known about the large gas fields in blocks it holds licences on for some years, but new drilling and appraisal work by its engineers over the past 18

months has led to the scale of the gas finds being reassessed.

The gas found by BP is estimated to be over 2.5 trillion (million-million) cubic feet, the equivalent to 450 million barrels of oil in energy terms, and will first come ashore in 1987. Supplies to the national gas network could be flowing fully by the early 1990s.

Because of the shallow water that the four fields are in, investment in offshore platforms will be less than for the oil fields in the northern sector of the North Sea.

Neverthe less BP estimates that as many as seven platforms will be needed to operate in depths of between 100 and 150 feet. These will in total involve an investment about equal to BP's massive Magnus platform, which was built in deep and hostile conditions and cost about £1.3 billion.

Tenders for the work will be invited from all off-shore



Sir Peter Walters: to announce record profits

industry suppliers, but BP will inevitably follow its policy of placing as much as it can in Britain. The offshore industry is likely to benefit from orders worth over 80 per cent of the total cost.

The four fields will be named Cleeton, Ravenspurn, Hyde and Hoten after four Yorkshire

villages which disappeared through coastal erosion between the 14th and 16th centuries.

The BP arrangement to sell the gas to the British Gas Corporation is still to be completed and the price to be paid per therm's a closely guarded commercial secret. However, it will increase pressure on the Norwegian offshore industry who are trying to sell British Gas output from their massive Sleipner field at a price around 30p a therm.

The price to be paid will also affect negotiations now going on between British Gas and the Dutch Government over supplies from their natural gas reserves.

The Department of Energy has told British Gas to negotiate its contracts with all suppliers, but BP, with such large reserves ready to come on stream years before any Norwegian or Dutch gas is available, have forced the prospect of British Gas buying from abroad into the late 1990s.

The Bank's new role

The Bank of England "will not allow foreign firms to throw their balance sheets at the London market", according to its key executive director, Mr David Walker - the man responsible for overseeing change in the British securities market - talks about the Bank's attitude to the market and the role it will play in nurse-making the development of the new City.

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STOCK EXCHANGES

FT-SE 100 1048.1 up 5.8 (day's high: 1047.1 low: 1042.1)
FT Index: 828.3 up 8.5
FT Gilts: 82.87 up 0.23
FT All Share: 496.06 up 2.84
Bargains: 21,929
Distream USM Leaders
Index: 108.86 up 0.11
New York: Dow Jones
Industrial Average:
(latest) 1158.19 up 3.56
Tokyo: Nikkei Dow Jones
Index 9,920.27 down 110.43

CURRENCIES

LONDON CLOSE

Sterling \$1.4775 down 1.3 cents
Index 82.9 down 0.4
DM 3.8575 down 0.0175
FF 11.87 down 0.0350
Yen 345 down 3.0

Dollar
Index 127.0 up 0.4
DM 2.6105 up 0.0145

NEW YORK LATEST
Sterling \$1.4795
Dollar DM 2.6100

INTERNATIONAL
ECU 20.578935
SDR 20.711974

INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates:
Bank base rate 9%

Finance houses base rate 9½%

Discount market loans week
fixed 9½ - 9%

3 month interbank 9½ - 9½%

Euro-currency rates:
3 month dollar 10½ - 10½%

3 month DM 5½ - 5½%

3 month Fr 16½ - 16½%

US rates:
Bank prime rate 11.00

Fed funds 9½%

Treasury long bond 98½ - 98½%

ECGD Fixed Rate Sterling
Export Finance Scheme IV

Average reference rate for
interest period January 4 to

February 7, 1984 inclusive:
9.493 per cent.

GOLD

London fixed (per ounce):
am \$395.25 pm \$392.75

close \$393.33-50 (\$266-
286.50)

New York (latest): \$392.75

Kruggerand (per coin):
\$405.406-50 (\$274-275)

Sovereigns (new):
\$92-93 (\$22-23-63)

*Excludes VAT

Bechtel likely to drop yard bid

By Jonathan Davis, Financial Correspondent

Bechtel, the American construction company, is expected today to drop out of the bidding for the Scott Lithgow shipyard.

The company has been competing with Trafalgar House and Howard Doris, the Anglo-French rig builders, in the race to try to buy the Clyde-side yard from British Shipbuilders. It has concentrated its efforts on agreeing terms with British about how it would complete the oil company's unfinished rig, which is acknowledged on all sides as being critical to the chances of the yard being saved from closure.

A spokesman for Bechtel said last night: "We have put our proposals in to British but what we have got to decide now is whether we pursue our plan, knowing what resistance there

has been to it, particularly in political circles."

Bechtel acknowledged that Trafalgar House was still in the lead with its bid for the yard, and had offered more favourable terms to British Shipbuilders. Bechtel is only interested in completing the Britoil rig, whereas Trafalgar House has said it would also take on the unfinished rig, which BP cancelled this week and a naval vessel on Scott Lithgow's books.

Bechtel said that Trafalgar House had also agreed to take over some of Scott Lithgow's debts, and would be retaining a greater member of the workforce. "Their bid is more far-reaching than the one we are in a position to make", the spokesman said. "On the other hand we have always regarded Britoil as the lynchpin of the

whole deal, and we have concentrated on making proposals that satisfy them."

Howard Doris is expected to press forward today with its bid in meetings with senior executives of British Shipbuilders. The company has also had a meeting with BP about its cancelled rig order, the first of the three bidders to do so.

Govan Shipbuilders on the Upper Clyde has won a £30m order to build three large colliers for the Central Electricity Generating Board.

The order for the 20,000 ton vessels will be formally signed in Glasgow today at a ceremony to be attended by Scottish Office ministers and Mr Graham Day, British Shipbuilders chairman.

Threatened Gulf looks for merger

From Nick Gilbert, New York

The bidding for Gulf is reaching new heights as the major US oil group desperately seeks a merger to outflank T Boone Pickens Jr, the Texas oil man who has been stalking Gulf for several months.

Mr Robert Anderson, chairman of Atlantic Richfield and former owner of The Observer newspaper, met James Lee, head of Gulf in Pittsburgh this week to discuss a bid rumoured to top \$13 billion. On Wall Street, Gulf is currently valued at \$11.5 billion, based on a price of \$69.5 a share.

Standard Oil of California is interested, and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, which last year bought most of Gulf's downstream European operations, is also thought to be taking a look.

Gulf, in its anxiety to stop Mr Pickens, is opening its books to interested parties, on condition they sign a non-disclosure agreement and agree to bid only if invited.

Mobil, the second largest oil company in the US, has reportedly refused these conditions, and after first saying it was interested only in certain Gulf assets, could step into the ring with a full bid.

The Gulf asking price is expected to rise to \$15 billion, dwarfing the \$10 billion Texaco paid for Getty Oil three weeks ago.

If Arco merged with Gulf, a vast oil, gas, coal and chemical combine would be created with assets approaching \$30 billion and the merged company would become the top US petrol marketer.

But so far only Mr Pickens has a firm, though partial, offer on the table and time is running out for Gulf.

Mr Pickens, aged 56, is the head of Mesa, which he formed only 20 years ago with a group of dissident Gulf shareholders, he already controls 13 per cent of Gulf. The consortium is offering to raise a further \$878m on a tender offer for a further 8 per cent of Gulf at \$65 a share, which closes on March 21.

Hopes remain of cut in mortgage rate

By Our City Staff

The chairman's committee of the Building Societies Association meets today to discuss savings and mortgage rates ahead of next week's full council meeting. A final decision is certain to be delayed until the special council meeting on March 16, three days after the Budget.

February savings receipts could exceed the £926m net receipts in January, which was the second best month on record. Mortgage demand is picking up, however, and some societies may find margins squeezed by the recent big tax

increase on gilts profits.

The imposition of the gilts tax will have widely different effects on societies. The Woolwich said yesterday it would only add about £2m to its tax bill this year and some other societies may have avoided much immediate impact by unloading gilt holdings before the midnight deadline for the new tax.

However, providing there are no big shocks in the Budget, there is still a fair chance of some reduction in mortgage rates in April or May.

Cluff Oil claims bid victory

By William Kay, City Editor

Mr J. G. "Algy" Cluff will today claim victory in his hard-fought £16m battle for control of Oil and Associated Investment Trust.

By the deadline of 3pm yesterday, holders of more than 60 per cent of Oil and Associated's shares had accepted the bid from the United Securities Market-quoted Cluff Oil. Officially, no comment was being made, but champagne was being uncorked at the City offices of Samuel Montagu, Cluff's merchant bank.

The deal amounts to a disguised rights issue for Cluff.

Mr Cluff has given himself little margin for error by making an offer valuing the portfolio at slightly more than its stated asset value.

The £16m or so cash which should be produced from the sale will be used to explore the leases which Cluff has won in the South China Sea.

The other obvious way of raising the money - with a rights issue of shares to his own shareholders - was effectively derailed by the failure of such an exercise last year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sterling slips 1.3 cents

The pound slipped yesterday, but this was seen on the foreign exchange markets as simply a hiccup in the fundamental new trend of dollar weakness. In a day of profit-taking, sterling actually lost 1.3 cents of its recent rise to close in London at \$1.4775.

As the latest beneficiary of scepticism over the dollar in the face of a clear reference by Mr Martin Feldstein, the US President's chief economic adviser, and statements by Mr Paul Volcker, the head of the US Federal Reserve: the pound also experienced some profit-taking corrections, particularly the more obviously undervalued Deutsche mark.

As a whole, sterling's trade-weighted average lost 0.4 to 82.9.

Company liquidity fell back in the final quarter of last year after the sharp rise in the third quarter but remains at its highest levels for five years, according to the latest survey of 240 large companies by the Trade and Industry Department.

Leicester-based British United Shoe Machinery, the world's largest shoe machinery and footwear materials plant, has won an order worth £2.7m to equip and start up a shoe factory in Lima, Peru.

American Airlines has announced the purchase of 67 McDonnell Douglas MD-80 jetliners with options for an additional 100. It is the largest single order in the history of commercial aviation.

More funds for Africa sought by World Bank

From Bailey Morris, Washington

In response to sharply deteriorating conditions in Africa, The World Bank has started negotiations with the European Community and Japan to see if they would be prepared to increase their development aid contributions in the next year.

Senior bank officials said the talks were preliminary and no figures had been discussed, but the aim was to make up a serious shortfall in funds caused by the US insistence on limiting funding for the bank's International Development Agency to \$9 billion a year.

Mr Ernest Stern, senior vice-president for operations, said:

"The EEC countries are interested because of the impact on Africa. We have held talks, which are in the early stages, to explore the conditions under which countries might be willing to contribute more."

Bank officials want to negotiate a supplemental funding package which would raise the IDA's resources from \$9 billion to the original \$12 billion level, supported by almost all of the bank's donor parties.

Mr Stern added: "Developments in sub-Saharan Africa are very depressing and appear dismal for the rest of the decade."

Accepting houses and Big Four discuss Gower proposal

Banks unlikely to agree on self-regulation

By Philip Robinson

The City's elite band of merchant banks which make up the Accepting Houses Committee (AHC) is now meeting the Big Four street clearing banks to see if they can be grouped as one for the purposes of self-regulation. But it is unlikely they will reach agreement.

One self-regulatory group to cover the banks was suggested by Professor Laurence "Jim" Gower in his review of protection for the investors, which came out in January.

Publicly, the Merchant banks have not resisted being grouped with other banks, but the AHC points out that it has had few complaints of its investment activities and while customers are happy, money spent on

administering self-regulation would be wasted.

The AHC made forceful protests two years ago when the Council for the Securities Industry, now rapidly trying to become the main force in self-regulation, tried to draw up a City-wide code of conduct, governing the behaviour of investment and fund managers.

The banks said then that they had their own in-house rules for fund managers and these had proved more than adequate.

Mr Robin Hutton, director-general of the AHC, said:

"What we would like to see is one self-regulatory group which would include the merchant banks and all those competing for the same business: stockbrokers, insurance companies, unit trusts, and clearing banks."



Professor Gower: registration urged

But that may prove rather impractical.

However, the merchant banks would not want to burden their customers with a large self-regulatory organiza-

tion whose cost would doubtless increase fees, he said.

Should a wide-ranging self-regulatory agency not be possible, the AGC would like to see an agency made up of just its own members.

In his report, Professor Gower said that he would like everyone who deals with investment of the public's money to be registered, either with a self-regulatory agency authorized by the Department of Trade and Industry or by the department itself.

His solution would be to create four important self-regulatory agencies.

Reaction to his report must reach the Department of Trade by April 30. The Council for the Securities Industry has already broadly welcomed his recommendations, but has yet to detail its response.

POWERLINE INTERNATIONAL plc

(Incorporated in England under the Companies Acts 1948 to 1976 No. 145032)

<p>Authorized</p> <p>£1,000,000</p>	<p>SHARE CAPITAL</p> <p>ordinary shares of 5p each</p>	<p>Issued and to be issued fully paid</p> <p>£532,919</p>
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Offer for Sale

by

Kleinwort, Benson Limited

of 3,443,762 ordinary shares of 5p each at 160p per share payable in full on application

Powerline International plc is involved in the marketing, distribution and servicing of electronic power supplies, and its 90 per cent owned associated company, Europower Limited, in their design and assembly. Further particulars relating to Powerline International plc are available in the Excel Statistical Services.

The Offer for Sale (on the terms of which alone application will be considered), with application forms, is being published today, 2nd March, 1984, in the Financial Times. The application list will open at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 8th March, 1984 and will close at such later time as Kleinwort, Benson Limited may decide.

Copies may also be obtained during normal business hours on any weekday (Saturdays excepted) up to and including 23rd March, 1984 from:

<p>Kleinwort, Benson Limited, 20 Fenchurch Street, London EC3P 3DB Tel 01-623 8000</p>	<p>James Capel & Co., Winchester House, 100 Old Broad Street, London EC2M 1BQ Tel 01-588 6010</p>	<p>Lloyds Bank Plc, Registrar's Department, Issue Section, 111 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AU Tel 01-683 1288</p>
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and from the following branches of Lloyds Bank Plc:

<p>Birmingham 125 Colmore Row Tel 021-633 1255</p>	<p>Edinburgh 58 Corn Street Tel 0222-277321</p>	<p>Glasgow 12 Borthwell Street Tel 041-249 4681</p>	<p>London 72 Lombard Street Tel 01-686 1500</p>	<p>Manchester 53 King Street Tel 061-833 0222</p>	<p>Reading 24 Broad Street Tel 0734-594011</p>
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Profits jump at office systems group

Consultants (Computer and Financial), which sells in-house software to stockbrokers, yesterday pleased the City with yearly profits up from £125,000 to £495,000, on turnover nearly £800,000 ahead at £2.1m. The final dividend is 4.2p, making a total of 6p against 3p last time.

Because the shares have become so heavy in the past year, they are to be subdivided from 10p par value to 5p, followed by a four-for-one scrip issue. This means that shareholders will have eight shares in the new form for every one held now, and the price will be slumped down accordingly.

Mr Tim Simon, the chairman, says that he is investigating new geographic areas, together with the possibility of selling software on a royalty basis through agents overseas.

He adds: "The group can look forward to steady growth on a greatly increased product and client base." Another new area being explored is leasing.

In brief

● **Powerline International for USM:** Powerline International announces that 32 per cent of its issued ordinary shares (approximately 1.44m shares) are being offered for sale by Kleinwort, Benson at 160p per share. Brokers to the issue are James Capel & Co. Application has been made for permission to deal in the capital in the Unlisted Securities Market. The application list will open at 10.00 am on March 8 and dealings are expected to start on March 14.

Powerline is the marketing, distribution and servicing of electronic supplies and its associate, Europower, in their design and assembly. Its technical sales force services more than 1,400 customers, none of which accounted for more than 6 per cent of turnover in 1983. Directors estimate that UK market for electronic power supplies is well in excess of £100m at 1983 values. The market is fragmented and not dominated by one supplier. The directors believe there is considerable potential for Powerline to increase both its sales and market share.

● **Headfins (Great Bridge):** Dividend for 1983 unchanged at 1.75p net a share. Figures in £000. Group loss attributable 126 (191) after all charges.

● **W. N. Sharpe:** Year to Dec 31, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 17,506 (15,910). Pre-tax profit 4,920 (4,999). Total dividend up from 9p to 12p net a share.

● **Courtesy Pope (Holdings):** Half-year to Nov 30, 1983. Figures in £000. Turnover 17,950 (14,947). Pre-tax profit 580 (480). Interim payment up from 1.6p to 2p net a share.

● **Quadrax Securities:** Quadrax, the international investment banking company based in London, reports retained earnings, after tax, of £1.3m for 1983. Net assets amounted to £5.3m, with fixed assets of £1.5m, and net current assets of £3.8m. Quadrax operates with £4m of share capital. The chairman said "we are very pleased with our accomplishments during our first year of operation."

● **Polytechnic Marine:** Half-year to Nov 30, 1984. Board intends to recommend a dividend for the current year of 2p a share. Figures in £000. Turnover 1,916 (1,475). Pre-tax profit 425 (345). This is the company's first interim results since its placing on the USM. The current order book underlines that the present growth level appears to be sustainable, says the board, though the electronic industry is facing an increasing problem obtaining suitable supplies of quality components.

● **EIB Loans:** Water supply and sewerage schemes in South Yorkshire, Devon and Cornwall are being supported with the equivalent of £13.5m in two loans from the European Investment Bank.

● **Tavenor Rutledge:** No dividend for 1983 (same). Figures in £000. Pre and post-tax profit 112 (219) loss.

● **Floras:** Reached agreement, subject to contract, with Cawoods to acquire an offshore, Portugal, an LPG marketing and distribution company based in Britain, for £1.2m.

The ultimate holding of Floras is Redland. The finance required by Floras to fund its expansion in Britain has been arranged by Development Capital Corp. in conjunction with investors in Industrial Ireland.

● **Albert Fisher:** Relating to the Henry Long Transport & Northside Truck Centre, together with the fixed assets of Bradford Properties, the acquisition agreement provides for a deferred consideration of £457,686 to be satisfied on November 31, 1984. Fisher board has agreed with the vendor, Ocean Transport & Trading, to satisfy the deferred consideration now for an agreed sum of £431,000 by the issue of Ocean of \$15,580 ordinary shares in Fisher.

Sarah Hogg begins a series on the Bank of England by talking to one of its top men

The Old Lady plays nursemaid to a reborn City



David Walker: in charge of industry and finance

Five new members took their seats at the Court of the Bank of England yesterday - completing a change of generations that has taken place in only two years. Since early 1982, the Bank has acquired a new Governor, economic adviser and three out of four of its executive directors.

The outside guard of non-executive directors has changed too. And "advisers" ally, where the elder statesmen of the Bank used to reside, is suddenly almost empty.

This new generation of Bank men faces a new set of issues: the upheaval in their ranks coincides with an upheaval in the Bank's surrounding territory. Since the Stock Exchange Bill freed the City from the paralysis induced by the case before the Restrictive Practices Court, all Britain's disparate financial institutions have been exercising their muscles - and eyeing the Bank.

The Bank, in turn, has been finding its way towards a new relationship with the Department of Trade and Industry, suddenly a government department of almost greater importance in its life than the Treasury.

Next week the new Governor, Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton, will make his most important speech yet - on the sensitive subject of "institutional liberalisation" in the City. Like all Governor's speeches, it will be the quintessence of opinion in the Bank. The most significant inputs will come from the two most prominent representatives of the new generation at the top of the Bank, Messrs Eddie George and David Walker.

Both Mr George and Mr Walker are executive directors, though only in their mid-40s. They reflect the Bank's particular and general concerns with institutional change. Mr George is ultimately responsible for the effective operation of the gilt market - where the Bank, with responsibility for government funding, is very definitely an interested party.

Mr Walker, in charge of "industry and finance", can take a more detached view. His prime concern is a healthy securities market, serving the interests of public and private borrowers and making a better living for Britain by recapturing its share of lost markets.

Recently he talked to me about the Bank's attitude to change - and the role it was prepared to play in bringing those changes about.

Mr Walker's summary of the Bank's interests is straightforward enough: "The Bank's prominent concerns in the change that is taking place are

to ensure that liquid markets are maintained or strengthened for the benefit of both borrowers and investors; to ensure that high standards are maintained and that the interest of investors and clients is satisfactorily protected; and that London markets and houses are competitive and secure a significant share of the rapidly expanding world securities market."

Apart from the much-debated issue of investor protection, the two key words there are "liquid" and "competitive". Liquidity in the gilt-edged market is a prime interest of the Bank's, though Mr Walker puts in his word for the interests of industrial borrowers in a liquid market too.

It relates particularly to an issue that much interests the City: the Bank's attitude to foreign, in particular American, entry into the British markets as the Stock Exchange's rules change.

There is a natural ambivalence in the Bank's attitude to foreign entrants. On the one hand, the extra liquidity is

attractive to the salesmen of government debt. On the other, there is a fear that if the big Americans came to dominate the gilt market and then went to sleep on the Government, the Bank would find itself in difficulties.

Mr Walker's view is sensibly conditioned by a desire to see British firms competing more energetically abroad: "We cannot compete effectively in international markets without allowing foreigners to become involved here. But we would not of course want to see foreign firms, which are immensely better capitalized than our own, throw their group balance sheets at the London market; that would be like inviting an elephant to a tea party."

So what's the answer? "Rules and understandings," says Mr Walker, "will be needed to deal with this and I am sure that foreign firms that come here will be keen to abide by them." Clearly, one of the rules this suggests would be some kind of separate capitalization for the London operations of the big Americans. Quite what other

restrictions the Bank could satisfactorily evolve that allow American elephants access to the gilt party without upsetting the tea is not so clear.

But Mr Walker, from his position in the Bank, has a prime interest in reviving the British securities industry, not dealing with the Americans. "There are," he believes, "three keys to London's greater success in the world securities market - competence, capital and competitiveness. We have a large natural advantage in the time zone between New York and Tokyo, but achieving better competitiveness to enable us to exploit this will require more nourishment of competence with capital."

While the Stock Exchange lay immobilized by legal action, the British securities industry lost ground it will be hard to recapture. With hindsight, many in the Bank now admit, should have fought harder to keep the Stock Exchange clear of the lawyers' delays involved in court action. As an example of how the industry has been losing business, the Bank has carried out a study of about 20 pension funds, showing that 95% of the outflow of capital that followed from the abolition of exchange controls was handled by non-British institutions.

As markets were opened up, British firms were less and less able to compete.

So what changes would the Bank like to encourage to "nourish competence with capital"? Here, naturally, Mr Walker was cautious: "The Bank has a good deal of diffidence about these matters and does not in any sense wish to produce a blueprint for change. It was not the object to replace the fiat of Restrictive Practices Court by fiat of the authorities. The prime change has to come from within the securities industry itself and, while the Bank is ready and able to act as an agent for change or catalyst, this means an immediate degree of Bank involvement in these matters which is not likely to persist after the immediate 'quantum jump' phase has passed and a new steady state is reached."

What it seems the Bank would like to encourage is the formation of a strong British group of institutions capable of competing in a more open British market, and abroad. But, though it is possible to see the chain of changes in Stock Exchange rules that would permit this, at the moment both sides seem to be playing a waiting game.

After the initial flurry of activity among outsiders, bagging good positions around the entry ports of the Stock Exchange, the spate of take-overs has slowed down to a trickle. Senior brokers have been asked into the Bank in order to canvass their views on the future shape of the City, but one gets the impression of a dialogue in which both sides are more anxious to find out what the other has to say than reveal their own opinions. At the moment, of course, the ball is in the Stock Exchange's court, until it has taken a preliminary series of decisions the next stage of the game cannot begin.

But if the British industry is to get itself in shape for that phase, it needs to get on with the job. There is talk of behind-the-scenes involvement by the Bank of a more purposive kind; alternatively, it is argued that the Bank will keep a hand on the brakes of change until it feels the industry has got its act together. (In the gilt-edged markets, it has also to be sure the Bank itself is ready for change.)

The Bank has the delicate task of nursemaid change without turning into a permanent governess - as many in the City suspect it may. But Mr Walker has experience of steering the Bank in and out of sensitive territory. During the early 1980s, he was the man who effectively ran the Government's industrial policy.

While the politicians stoutly maintained it would offer no crutches to lame ducks, it encouraged the Bank of England to patch together several rescue operations. Now Mr Walker quotes this experience as an example of how the Bank can become engaged and then withdraw: "During the disagreeable years of industrial crisis, problems involved so many banks that the Bank found it necessary to take a lead in sorting things out. Now it is withdrawing, leaving the lead banks to run such multi-bank negotiations."

Sorting things out is a prime task for the Bank. But the end moment of this particular engagement is less easy to discern.

APPOINTMENTS

Sir Kenneth named as director

Atken Hume Holdings: Sir Kenneth Cork has become a director.

British Airways International: Mr Don Turner, planning director for the British Airways Authority, is now the chairman of BAI.

Pressac Holdings: Mr Roger Boissier has become a director. BSI International: Mr Alex Wu has been made a non-executive director.

Desoutter Brothers (Holdings): Mr C. R. Desoutter is now marketing director of Desoutter Limited.

Perot International: Mr Claude de Jouvencel, currently managing director of J. R. Parkington, is to return to Paris as Perot Ricard International's vice-president for sales and marketing from September 1. M. Michel Eberlin will take over as managing director of Parkington. He is currently sales manager for Europe and Northern America. M. Jean-Louis Lepeltier is to expand his duties as financial director to become deputy managing director of Parkington as well.

Old Course Golf and Country Club: Mr Paul Phillips has been appointed as executive director, to be responsible for the operation in St Andrews.

GESTETNER HOLDINGS PLC

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Gestetner Holdings PLC will be held at 10.00 am on 15th March 1984, at the Grosvenor Hotel, Grosvenor Road, London NW1, for the purpose of:

1. To receive and adopt the report and accounts for the financial year ended on November 30, 1983.

2. To elect one or more directors in place of those retiring at the meeting.

A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote for him, provided that the proxy is a natural person who is at least 18 years of age at the time of the meeting and is not a director of the company. The proxy must be signed by the member or by a person authorized by him in writing to do so. The proxy must be deposited with the company at least 48 hours before the meeting. The company's directors are available for consultation on matters relating to the meeting. The meeting will be held at the Grosvenor Hotel, Grosvenor Road, London NW1, at 10.00 am on 15th March 1984.

1983/84				1982/83				1981/82				1980/81				1979/80			
Unit	Price	Div	Yield	Unit	Price	Div	Yield	Unit	Price	Div	Yield	Unit	Price	Div	Yield	Unit	Price	Div	Yield
Authorized Unit Trusts																			
1st British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	1st British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	1st British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	1st British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	1st British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
2nd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	2nd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	2nd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	2nd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	2nd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
3rd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	3rd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	3rd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	3rd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	3rd British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
4th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	4th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	4th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	4th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	4th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
5th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	5th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	5th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	5th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	5th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
6th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	6th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	6th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	6th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	6th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
7th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	7th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	7th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	7th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	7th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
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27th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	27th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	27th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	27th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	27th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
28th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	28th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	28th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	28th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	28th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
29th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	29th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	29th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	29th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	29th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%
30th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	30th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	30th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	30th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%	30th British Unit Trust	100.00	1.00	1.00%

RECENT ISSUES

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

BRITISH FUNDS

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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New suitor for Border Breweries

The behind-the-scenes battle for control of Border Breweries of Wrexham took another extraordinary twist yesterday when it emerged that there is yet another potential bidder, bringing the number of known suitors to three. Observers believe that there could be yet more of them.

It is understood that the latest company to have opened takeover talks with Border is Stoke on Trent based brewery, Greenall Whitley. It joins Forthwells Burtonwood Brewery of Warrington, which already has a £9.4m bid on the table and Marston Thompson & Evershed of Burton on Trent, which recently emerged as an 8.2 per cent shareholder and has put on the board for consideration.

Burder's directors announced yesterday that talks which might lead to a recommended offer were at an advanced stage.

Burder's share price last night rose 12p to 240p.

Restaurant group sees profits rise

Kennedy Brookes, the London restaurant group which runs such names as Mario and Franco, Genevieve and now Wheelers, yesterday announced pretax profits of £886,000 for the year to last October, compared with £565,000 the year before. Sales were £3m higher at £12.4m.

The figures include only seven days' contribution from the Wheelers chain of fish restaurants.

However, the dividend has to be spread out to embrace the former Wheelers shareholders who are now on the Kennedy list, so the final payment is rising by only 0.175p to 0.875p a share, making a total of 1.4p.

With Wheelers fully integrated into the group, the company expects sales in the current year to grow to £22m.

Michael Golder, the chairman, notes that investment for further growth is not likely to be fully reflected in profits until 1984-5.

Cotts group up 30% in first half

Mitchell Cotts, the overseas engineer and transport group whose main interests are in South Africa and Australia, reported a 30 per cent jump in first-half profits yesterday.

The group reported pretax profits of £3.45m, on a turnover down from £26m to £18.9m, over the six months to the end of last December, against £2.6m last time.

Mr Philip Dunkley, chairman, said: "We were more confident that Cotts would last year's 27.3m, half £2m lower than the previous year."

Cotts is cutting its 5,000-acre Ugandan tea estates into a manageable size. In the two and a half years it has been allowed to return to the country, the group has trimmed about a quarter of the trees.

With its British engineering side back into profits and a useful contribution coming from the group's chemical division in Yorkshire, the group will pay less British tax.

Bairistow in £1.9m takeover

Bairistow Eves, the first firm of estate agents to get a public quote, yesterday announced that it had bought a firm of insurance brokers for £1.9m.

The acquisition of Peter Rainbow & Associates is to provide mortgages for the houses it sells through Taylors, the chain of estate agents it has just bought in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire.

Yesterday Mr John Bairistow, chairman of the Essex-based estate agents, said: "We've always provided mortgages through our own mortgage and finance department. We've expanded recently into this new area but decided that it was not practical to send people down to our Brentwood headquarters."

Bairistow is paying Mr Peter Rainbow, the broker's chairman and chief executive, with Bairistow shares. He will stay on with the business and has £900,000 for the three years up to March 1987.

Ziff digs in despite Harris coup

Mr Arnold Ziff, the chairman of the family-controlled Style shoe business, yesterday indicated that he intended to fight a drawn-out battle against the unwanted £35m bid from Harris Queensway and was unlikely to talk to the furniture and carpet group.

Mr Ziff's rebuff to Mr Phil Harris, Harris's chairman, came despite confirmation that Harris had received acceptance for more than 50 per cent of the shares by the first closing date on Wednesday.

Yesterday Lloyds Bank International, Style's merchant bank, said: "We had a short meeting with Mr Ziff this morning and decided we see no point in talking with Harris."

The figure that matters is that Mr Harris has got only 30 per cent of the votes.

The Ziff family has control of Style through its ownership of unlisted management shares which have more voting rights than the ordinary shares.

BELLS
SCOTCH WHISKY
BELLS

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

COMMONWEALTH AND FOREIGN

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

C-E

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

F-H

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

INSURANCE

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

PROPERTY

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

DOLLAR STOCKS

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

BANKS AND DISCOUNTS

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

A-B

Company	Price	Change	Yield
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
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Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%
Amoco Energy (Ord) (150p)	142	+	13.8%

C-E

De La Rue	652	..	4.9	5.4
Dee	68	..	4.9	5.4
Delta Corp	77	+2	4.8	5.4
Dewberry & C. J.	130	..	5.1	1.2
Dixons Grp PLC	245	-3	5.8	2.4
Dobson Park	78	..	7.4	8.3
Dodd	66	..	6.8	6.6
Dow Int Grp	121	+1	6.0	5.0
Douglas R. M.	68	..	3.5	3.7
Dow d & Mills	84 1/2	..	5.1	3.6
Dowry Grp	132	..	5.1	5.1
Empire Bldgs	132	+1	5.1	5.1
EBES	524 1/2	..	28.1	10.3
E Mid A Press A	79	..	3.0	3.7
Edbro (Hldgs)	117	+2	7.1	8.1
Elecs Hldgs	86	..	4.7	5.4
ELF	76	..	4.7	6.8
Electrocoms	263	+3	4.7	1.6
Electrolux 'B' F23	123	..	95.3	4.2
Electric Natl	51	..	4.6	9.1

THE DIRECTORS LODGE CLUB

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLDERS - SEC. for visitor's office, North London flat, near Uxbridge station. Includes breakfast, laundry, correspondence. Phone: 0181-871 1111. E-mail: householders@compuserve.com. Most important: Tel: 01-7522 9020.

HOUSEWORKERS - Daily housework, most important: Tel: 01-7522 9020.

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Domestic and Catering - Tel: 01-7522 9020.

DOMESTIC AND CATERING SERVICES REQUIRED

INVESTMENT BANKERS - who best. Tel: 01-7522 9020.

LEGAL NOTICES

No 007706 of 1993

In the High Court of Justice Chancery Division, the said of SVETITSKY, Plaintiff, vs. the said of SVETITSKY, Defendant.

London. Tel: 7448 6095 ext: 7944.

[illegible][illegible]

Seditious to corrupt and prove
 void debts or claims at such time
 as shall be specified in such notice
 or in default thereof they will be
 excluded from the benefit of any ad-
 judgment made before such debts are
 proved.
 Dated 25th day of August 1868.
 ROGER ALLEN & CLARK
 Attorneys at Law
 This notice is purely formal; all the
 creditors have been, or will be, pre-
 sent.

The Companies Act 1948 is
 FRANTON PRESS Limited
 NOTICE is hereby given that a
 section 205 of the COMPANIES
 ACT 1948, shall be held at the
 OFFICES of the above-named Com-
 pany will be held at Second Floor, 5,
 Court House, Broad Quay,
 on Tuesday, the twentieth day of
 August 1968, at 11 o'clock in the
 forenoon, for the purpose of meet-
 ing the creditors of the said Com-
 pany in order to pass the Resolu-
 tion of the said 27th day of Febru-
 ary 1968.
 By Order of the Board
 R. J. Smith
 Director

PUBLIC NOTICES

**FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA
AT CANBERRA**

TO GWENDOLINE NANCY REES

**TAKE NOTICE THAT EDWARD
VERNON REES**

of 202 Mercantile Street, Sydney, New South Wales, has applied for Discharge of Marriage in the Family Court of Australia at Canberra which is to take place for hearing on 7 May 1984 at 10.00 a.m. Any wife wishing to file a copy of application paper may do so by filing it with the Registrar General of the High Court, Level 6, 100 Macquarie Street, Sydney, New South Wales.

**DAVID J. CROFT, Solicitor,
Canberra Place,
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601**

CHARITY COMMISSION CHAS

Charities in connection with the Leagues Club, The Technical College Machinery Manufacturers' Association, Leatherworkers Company, and the Australian Leatherworkers Trade Schemes for these charities are invited to apply for grants from the Federal Government. Enquiries to Mr. R. G. Smith, Secretary, Leagues Club, 100 Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 357-6000 A1-L2.

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SECRETARIES

\$8,000 Architects - W!

Secretary with organizing skills and initiative for friendly company. Secretarial skills and word processing needed.

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A leading merchant bank in ECU has an intelligent and enthusiastic person to take responsibility for organizing annual conferences. The Conference will be organized with a good reputation. Salary £20,000 - £25,000 + bonus. Full time hours. Please ring Crane Carriage Hire Ltd on 01-754 0032.

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PA Secretary**
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Schofield-Brown Line, 58/59, Pinner
High Street, London SW15 1SP

also on page 33

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1977 excellent condition.

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881146. MERCEDES 240D Midnight Blue

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white, 38,000 miles, full history,
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New condition. Tel 01 882 2387 CT

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extras. 12,000 miles. £24,000
021 453 1711. See us today

OPERA & BALLET

CONCERTS

Ton't at 7.30pm, Swan Lake. Tomor.
Wed at 7.30pm. Afternoon of a
Tues. 7.30pm. 7.30pm. 7.30pm.

1994

Arts Council

I've heard in yours" Downbeat!

March

Sat. 17 8.00 pm
LEICESTER, Phoenix Arts 0533-3448
HYDRAUCHAMA, South-Sea House 021-559 626

1. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1997, 34, 1, 1-14.

Synod backs bishops' plan on remarriage

By Clifford Longley, Religious Affairs Correspondent

The General Synod of the Church of England is to try again to find acceptable proposals for remarrying divorced people in church.

It decided yesterday that the earlier proposals were not fit to be put to the principle that some divorced people should be allowed a church wedding.

The House of Bishops will now prepare a detailed scheme to replace the ill-fated Option G proposals, and in the longer term there will be a study of the present strained relationship between church and state over marriage.

The synod resolved by substantial majorities in each of its three houses, that the House of Bishops, should draft a church regulation which would:



The Bishop of Birmingham (left) and Sir William van Straubenzee

- Place the responsibility for decisions in cases of remarriage upon the diocesan bishop in consultation with the parish priest.
- Permit the possibility of appropriate cases being referred to a diocesan panel of advisers, with the parties having a right to appeal to the panel.
- Be "more evidently pastoral" in its application and
- Set out clearly agreed guidelines for the use of bishops, clergy, and the panels.

The new proposals were put together in the light of widespread opposition to Option G from the clergy.

It quickly became apparent that the two thirds of the synod previously in favour of Option G had transferred allegiance to the new proposals.

An alternative, behind which all the opponents of remarriage in principle rallied was proposed by the Bishop of Salisbury, Dr John Baker. It was defeated by 126 votes to 395.

The proposal of the House of Bishops was presented by the Bishop of Winchester, Dr John Taylor, who asked the synod to

say whether it wanted a fresh attempt to modify the marriage discipline.

Consultations with the clergy had pointed to aspects of the old proposals which could be amplified. He said, however: "Let us not pretend that any scheme can be devised which will wholly satisfy those who are looking for a modification of our existing marriage discipline regarding divorced persons, and those who want no change."

He was strongly supported by Dr Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who said: "It has always been my hope that we could combine the highest doctrine of marriage as a permanent and lifelong relationship with a confident generosity towards those whose marriages have irrevocably broken down in any genuine desire they have to build out of failure and penitence, and to enter into a true Christian marriage."

"I believe this is not unbiblical, untheological or unprejudiced in the Christian tradition," he declared.

The proposal was strongly opposed by Dr Graham Leach, the Bishop of London. He said that the church had made a mistake with Option G, and found itself in a cul de sac.

The church had failed to be faithful to the teaching of Christ, and equally had failed to meet the needs of Britain at this time. To offer repetition of the marriage service and its vows "will inevitably be taken by the country at large with deep disappointment and with sadness if not with anger, as no more than the church coming along to endorse what the state had done."

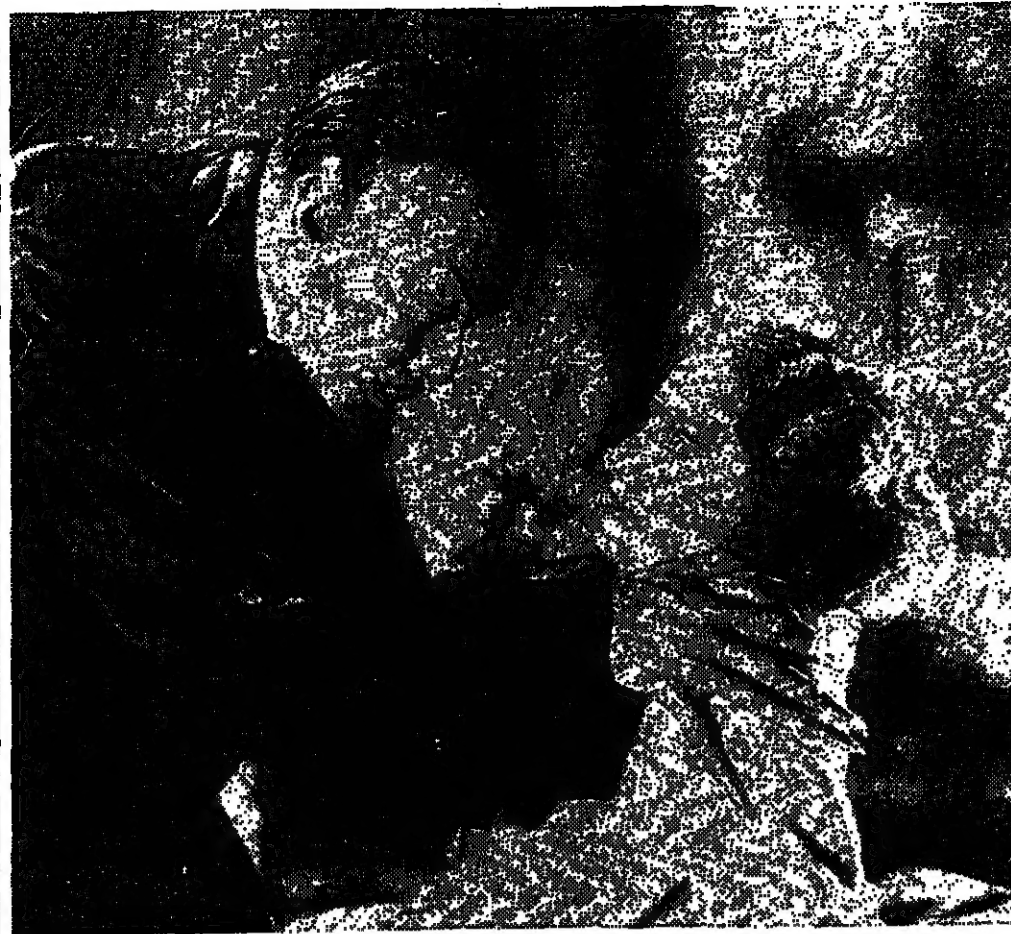
The Bishop of Salisbury, also objecting to the proposals, said that Option G had fallen into the trap of trying to join together "what logic, unfortunately, will always put asunder."

The bishops' new suggestions would repeat that mistake, he said.

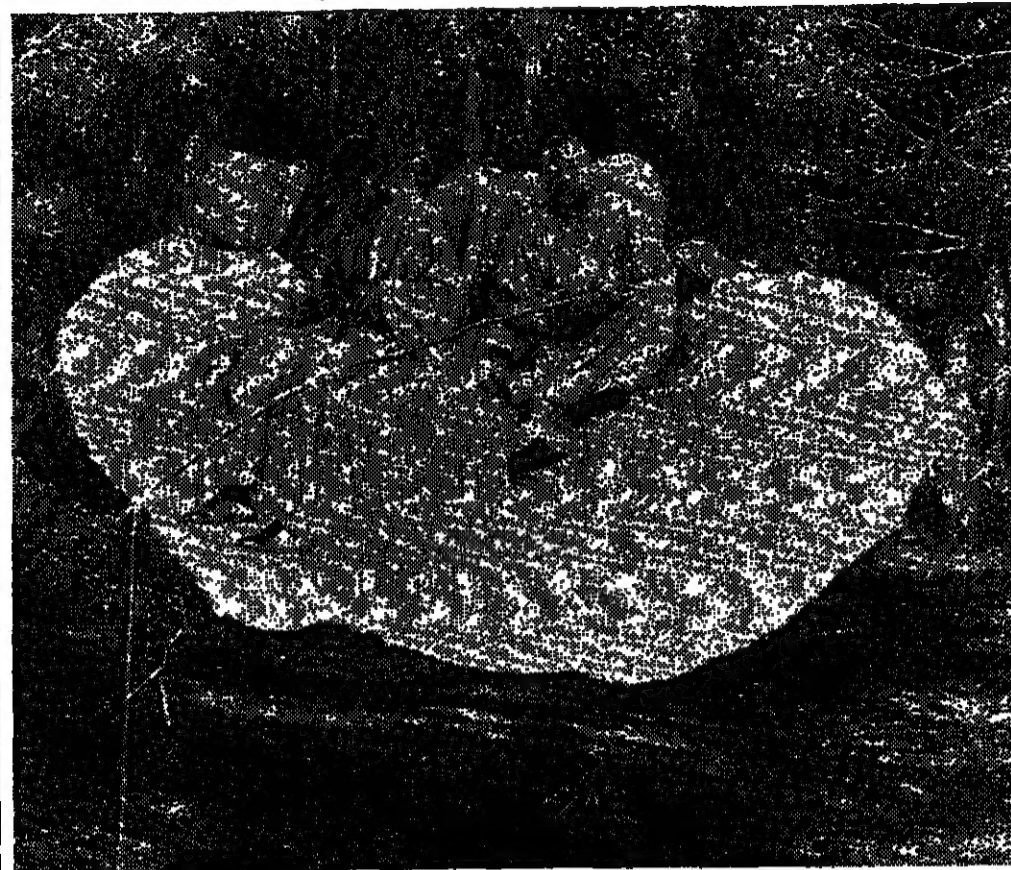
Sir William van Straubenzee, Conservative MP for Woking and Second Church Estates Commissioner, said that would require a change in the law to separate the church's administration of marriage from the civil law of marriage.

There were repeated attempts to reverse the synod's standing commitment of find some way of remarrying divorcees in appropriate circumstances.

What the 1930s censors cut...



Banned: for showing a relationship between an Oriental and a white woman.



Banned: for its representation of an all-Negro Heaven.

By David Hewson
Arts Correspondent

The secrets of Britain's film censors of the 1930s will finally become public tonight. The opinions of Colonel J. C. Hanna, a retired army officer and Miss N. Short, a sheltered upper-class spinster in her thirties were paramount in deciding what went on the British cinema screen.

As script examiners to the British Board of Film Censors, they set the standard of cinema taste in tones which seem somewhat risible today.

Faced with a script about the illegal attentions of a Malay rajah to a white woman saddled with a diplomatically fiancé, Colonel Hanna thundered: "The sight of a white man drifting to degradation through drink in native surroundings is always unpleasant and the amorous desire of a native to get possession of a white woman is almost, if not quite, a prohibitive theme." The film was never made.

Miss Short's blue pencil was just as cutting. Faced with a script from Gammut, she ordered: "Delete 'masochist' (I cannot remember what this means) venery, savagery, aphrodisiac, libidinous, sensual, thrill, flesh-burning orgies, belly action, cheap piker, goddam, bum, harlot." The film *Storm in a Teacup* got off more lightly. "Delete 'auts', 'pansy-faced' and close-up of the Speaker of the Commons."

The secret fears of the censors were found in the archives of the British Film Institute, which has turned them into a dramatized presentation of censorship which is previewed at the National Film Theatre tonight, with clips of some of the banned scenes.

The censors objected vehemently to the making of a film of Walter Greenwood's novel *Love on the Dole*. "This is a very sordid story in very sordid surroundings," Colonel Hanna observed.

The film was eventually made during the war, but many titles released in America never passed the board's scrutiny. *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* (1932) was banned because it showed a relationship between an Oriental and a white woman. *Green Pastures* (1936) fell foul of the censors for portraying an all-Negro Heaven.

Sex was a constant problem. Miss Short commented in 1931: "There are some producers who delight to show the female form divine in a state of attractive address . . . for the purpose of giving the film what is termed in the trade 'a spicy flavour'."

(Photographs courtesy of the National Film Archive)

Letter from Brunei

Harmony reigns on royal polo fields

Harmony in this Malay corner of the world, with its explosive brew of proud royal houses and newly independent peoples, has been won largely on the polo field. It is a relatively short time since Malaysia was proposing resolutions in the United Nations complaining about Brunei's colonial status; Indonesia was sponsoring insurgency in the early 1960s.

Many of those differences have been smoothed out at polo matches played between royal teams from the states of Malaysia and Brunei. It was not until 1972 that the first polo pony arrived in Brunei, brought in by a local manager of the Chartered Bank. At first it was just a question of knocking a ball about on a nondescript piece of ground that could scarcely be called a pitch near the barracks of what was then the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment.

But when royal interest in the game became apparent foreign banks, firms and the British Army scoured their ranks around the world for polo players to post to the Sultanate. By 1980 Malaysian teams were visiting regularly and that year the first team was brought in by the King of Malaysia.

Since then polo diplomacy has sped Malaysia on to its goal of matching the already close friendship between Brunei and Singapore. Even the Sultan of Brunei's new-found self-confidence is attributed to the game. "Before he started playing polo he was shy and out of condition. It has made a man of him."

During his recent visit the Prince of Wales and the Sultan played polo, choosing their mounts from the Sultan's stable of 250 active horses. As they played, on the shaded veranda of the clubhouse - finished only that morning - stood Sultan Mahmood Iskandar of Johore, soon to become King of Malaysia; Sir Muda Omar Ali Saifuddin, father of the Sultan of Brunei; a bevy of exquisite Malay ladies and the senior British officers of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces with their wives.

A celebration of royal privilege out of the period of high colonialism, and yet it was very much a contemporary diplomatic scene: a mark of the successful transition of Brunei into the South-East Asian family.

For years all the portents had seemed to indicate that it would not be done without tears and might not last long should it ever come to pass.

The combination of the Sultan's enthusiasm and his stupendous wealth has resulted in the world's largest polo club at Jerudong. There are three grounds, air-conditioned stabling for the horses and a suitably pleasant, landscaped study farm. Close to the main ground there is a helipad. But when Prince Charles was there the Sultan chose to arrive in one of his latest acquisitions, a special-order all-white leather hood.

The Sultan was particularly pleased. For years he had been wanting to entertain the Prince of Wales at polo. He almost did not get his wish when the monsoon's daily deliveries seemed likely to drown the whole affair.

With only four hours before Prince Charles boarded his VC 10 to fly home the game was on, but only after two new machines flown specially from Australia had been used to suck flood water out of the ground.

The going was still wet and sufficiently treacherous to unsettle two Bruneian princes. According to rather partial British sources the Prince of Wales was the best player on the field, while the Sultan of Brunei was rated the most improved. But then the Sultan is able to practice almost every afternoon.

The Prince and the Sultan were happily in the winning team, which won by seven goals to two. Precisely who scored what was not always clear, but it is safe to say that the Royal Houses of Brunei and Britain took most of the honours.

But if the polo match was a symbol of historic continuity it was also indicative of the future. Even though the Sultan's polo exploits are assiduously reported by Brunei radio and television there were no ordinary Bruneian spectators, except those needed to tread in the divots. Nothing could have more clearly illustrated the great gulf that separates the ruler from the ruled.

David Watts

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

Royal engagements
The Duke of Edinburgh visits Nottingham, arrives Nottingham Station, 9.55.

Princess Anne, Chancellor of the London University, attends a Dinner at the University College Women's Dining Club, at University College, W.C.1, 7.30.

New exhibitions
Paintings by Sonia Rastoff, Ginnel Gallery, Lloyds House, 16 Lloyd Street, Manchester; daily 9 to 5 (Thurs 9 to 8) (until March 25).

Paintings by George Blacklock and Clive Hodgson, Ikon Gallery, 58-72 John Bright Street, Birmingham; Tues to Sat 10 to 6 (until March 31).

Homer's heroes - Mycenaean Greece until April 30; Change in the inner-city; both at Museum and Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham; Mon to Sat 10 to 5, Sun 2 to 5.

Gods and goddesses of the Roman Cotswolds, Cotswold Museum, Cheltenham; Tues to Sat 10 to 5, Sun 2 to 5 (until September 30). Recent paintings by Y. S. Huntley, Banbury Museum, 8

Horsefair, Banbury, Oxfordshire; weekdays (not Tues) 10 to 4 (until March 24).

Last chance to see
Mapping the New World: ancient maps and portraits. Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, Dorset County Museum, Dorchester; 10 to 5 (ends today).

Images of West Penwith: paintings and sculptures by Keith Barrett and Terry Whybrow, Falmouth Art Gallery, Falmouth, Cornwall; 10 to 1, and 2 to 4.30 (ends today).

Exhibitions in progress
Colman's mustard pot collection; Sheffield City Museum, Weston Park, Sheffield; Mon to Sat 10 to 5, Sun 11 to 5 (ends April 1).

Dan Klein Studio Glass exhibition; Brighton Museum Church Street, Brighton; Tues to Sat 10 to 5.45, Sun 2 to 5 (closed Mon) (ends May 20).

Talks, lectures
War and the ideology of sacrifice; by Professor S. W. Sykes, 5.15; and Ancient Shipwrecks, by Dr A. J. Parker, 5.30; Elms Riverside Lecture Room 140, Stage 1, Durham University.

Nucleosome structure and chromatin superstructure, by Dr Aaron Klug, Lecture Theatre 2, Bennett Building, Leicester University.

Music
Song recital by Nigel Rogers (tenor) and Richard Barnett (piano); Theatre - Royal, Jersey Street, Winchester, 7.45.

Concert by Orchestra De Camera, Library Theatre, Solihull, West Midlands, 8.

Concert by the County of Avon Schools Orchestra, Colston Hall, Colston Street, Bristol, 7.30.

Classical piano trio open rehearsal, Holburne Museum, Bath, 7.30.

Recital by Lynn McLaren (flute) and Philip Booth (piano), Big School Theatre Studio, Hereford Cathedral School, 7.45.

Concert by the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Wyvern Theatre, Swindon, Wiltshire, 7.30.

Concert by the Scottish National Orchestra, Usher Hall, Edinburgh, 7.30.

General
Scottish Student Drama Festival: St Andrew's University Mermaids in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Third Eye Centre, 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, 7.30.

Parliament today
Commons (9.30): Debate on private Member's motion on the provision of homes.

Anniversaries
Births: Bedrich Smetana, Litomyšl (Czechoslovakia), 1824; Deaths: John Wesley, London, 1791; Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Orford, writer, author of *The Castle of Otranto*, London, 1797; D. H. Lawrence, Venice, France, 1930; Howard Carter, archaeologist, discoverer of Tutankhamun's tomb, 1922, London, 1939.

First crossing of the Antarctic, by an expedition led by Sir Vivian Fuchs.

Roads

Midlands and East Angles A16: Roadworks with traffic signals along St Mary's Street, Ely, Cambridgeshire. A34 Roadworks at Tidmington, Warwickshire, south of Shipston on Stour; delays. A47: Traffic signals at Postwick between Norwich and Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Wales and West A38: Roadworks between Wilton, Wiltshire, and Stockbridge, Hampshire; restrictions at Tinkertop and Salisbury. A40: Surfacing between Banchory and St Clears, Dyfed; temporary traffic signals, delays. A404: Roadworks at Haymarket, Bristol; one lane only on the northbound carriageway.

North A575: Major sewer works at Egerton Street, Farnworth, Greater Manchester; road closed near junction with Gladstone Road, diversions in operation. Liverpool: Queensway Tunnel closed nightly, all traffic diverted via the Liverpool-Wallasey tunnel between 9.15pm and 5.45am. A66: Roadworks between North Bitts and Greta Bridge, Durham.

Scotland A74: Patching work in progress between Strathclyde regional boundary and the Scotland-England border; lane closures. A74: Patching work south of Crawford; southbound carriageway closed, all traffic sharing northbound carriageway. A74: Telephone ducting work between the B740 junction and Abington; inside lane of southbound carriageway closed.

Information supplied by the AA.

The papers
Both the Daily Star and the Daily Mirror are critical of tax increases rumoured to be being considered by Mr Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for this year's Budget. The papers concentrate their criticisms on suggestions that indirect tax increases will be used to enable personal taxes to be held to their present level, or even reduced.

The Daily Mirror, which is critical of the fact that Mr Lawson "has already, through the Inland Revenue, imposed a new tax on building societies which will prevent the cost of a mortgage from coming down . . . and is telling the banks that in future they must deduct income tax from the interest paid on deposit accounts, even where the saver is not liable to the tax . . . adds: "He is scavenging for every penny and proposing, it seems, to use all he can grab for tax relief for the better-off."

There is plenty of good fruit available; apples, pears and citrus especially, and Coxes still wonderfully crisp and juicy. Safeway have Golden Delicious at 18p per lb. Grapes from the Cape are cheaper this week at from 75 to 90p per lb.

The pound
Australia \$ 1.64 1.56
Austria Sch 28.50 26.90
Belgium Fr 85.25 81.25
Canada \$ 1.92 1.85
Denmark Kr 14.75 14.05
Finland Mk 8.69 8.29
France Fr 12.26 11.76
Germany DM 4.00 3.82
Greece Dr 163.00 153.00
Hong Kong \$ 11.80 11.20
Ireland Pt 1.31 1.25
Italy Lira 2475.00 2375.00
Japan Yen 265.00 245.00
Netherlands Gld 11.62 11.02
Norway Kr 201.00 191.00
Portugal Esc 206.00 196.00
South Africa Rd 226.50 217.50
Spain Ps 16.00 15.00
Sweden Kr 12.05 11.45
Switzerland Fr 3.54 3.17
USA \$ 1.528 1.475
Yugoslavia Dnr 211.00 201.00

Notes for great denomination bank notes, only as supplied by Barclays Bank International Ltd. Custom rates apply to inwardly cleared and other foreign currency transactions.

Retail Price Index: 342.60.
London: The FT Index closed up 8.5 at 828.3

Food prices

Home produced lamb prices are up yet again this week. Whole leg ranges from £1.50 to £1.92 per lb. whole shoulder from 90p to £1.23 and loin chops from £1.60 to £2.30. But New Zealand whole shoulder is only 65-90p and Sainsbury have a special offer of whole leg at £1.19 and knuckle half at £1.26. Beef is a good buy, topside and silverside between £1.89 and £2.30 per lb and fore ribs at £1.25 to £1.56. Sainsbury have reduced rib meat by 20p to £1.49 per lb. Tesco have chuck and braising steak and boneless rib at £1.44 and Fine Fare mince at 98p per lb.

Good pigs are in short supply, according to Dewhurst and pork prices are slightly up for some cuts. Loin chops are £1.13 to £1.40, rib chops 92p to £1.30, fillet end of leg 93p to £1.39 and boneless streaky 90p to £1.30 per lb. Marks and Spencer have fresh chickens at 69p per lb and Safeway 3 lb packs of chicken thighs reduced from £1.89 to £1.19.

Fish is an attractive buy; cod, fillets £1.33 per lb, haddock £1.39, plaice £1.33, sole £1.58 and mackerel 48p.

Canary Island salad tomatoes at 45 to 55p per lb are excellent value, and beef tomatoes at 40 to 55p are also good quality. Chichester leaves 30 to 55p per lb; cucumbers 35 to 45p each; round English and Dutch lettuce 25 to 35p each. Tesco have Spanish iceberg at 65p. Otherwise there are few changes in vegetable prices, but carrots are a little cheaper at from 8 to 18p per lb.

Peas, from 65 to 80p and courgettes from 60 to 80p are all good buys. Leeks from 34 to 42p per lb are always delicious.

Sun rises: 6.43 am
Moon rises: 5.17 pm
New Moon: 6.31 pm

Lighting-up time
London 6.13 pm to 6.11 am
Bristol 6.23 pm to 6.21 am
Liverpool 6.30 pm to 6.28 am
Manchester 6.19 pm to 6.22 am
Penzance 6.26 pm to 6.21 am

Yesterday
Temperature at midday yesterday: a. cloudy; f. fair; r. rain, s. sun.
C F
Belfast 47 115
Birmingham 47 115
Bristol 47 115
Cardiff 47 115
Edinburgh 47 115
Glasgow 47 115
Liverpool 47 115
London 47 115
Manchester 47 115
Newcastle 47 115
Nottingham 47 115
Penzance 47 115
Sheffield 47 115
Southampton 47 115
Stoke 47 115
Sunderland 47 115
Tyneside 47 115
Wolverhampton 47 115
Wrexham 47 115

Highest and lowest
Highest day temp: Southampton, 14C
Lowest day temp: London, 10C
Highest night temp: London, 5C
Lowest night temp: Southampton, 1C

London
Yesterday: Temp: max 6 am to 6 pm, 13C
6.57 to 6 pm, 14C. SC 14.4C. Humidity: 65%. Wind: 7 to 10 mph. Rain: 0.2mm. Sea: 2.4m to 6 pm, 4.4m. Bar: mean sea level, 6.0 mm. 1.012.6 mm. Range: 0.2 mm. Cloud: 100%.

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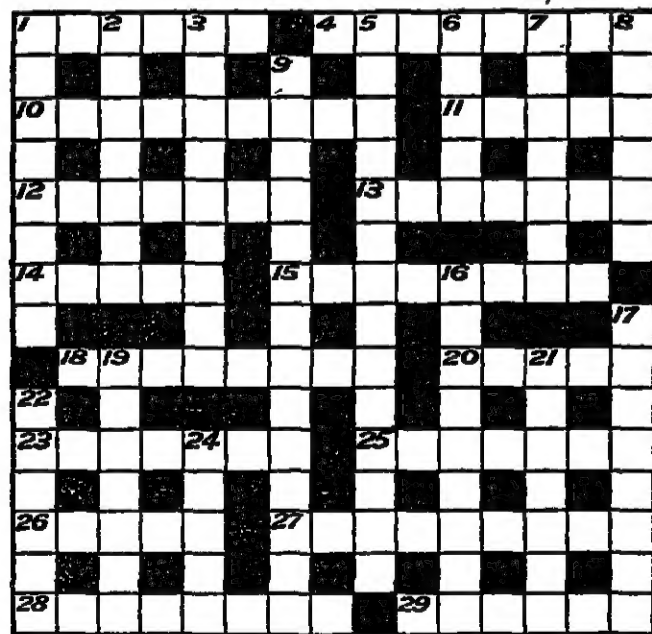
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The Times Crossword Puzzle No 16,368



ACROSS

- Petty cash in USA (3-3).
- Prepared to be moved (8).
- Fruitful source of temptation (5,4).
- Old priest, breaking an ear, might get a rod instead (5).
- Name Irish writer with an unfinished column (7).
- Seer was hated at first - nonsense! (7).
- Musical piece has Number Ten's backing (5).
- Dropped issue, having acted like a lout (8).
- Kind of racing where bumping is allowed (5-3).
- Perfect plan followed by novice (5).
- Splendid article about a Spanish city (